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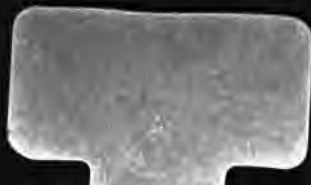
SONGS OF EARLY SPRING



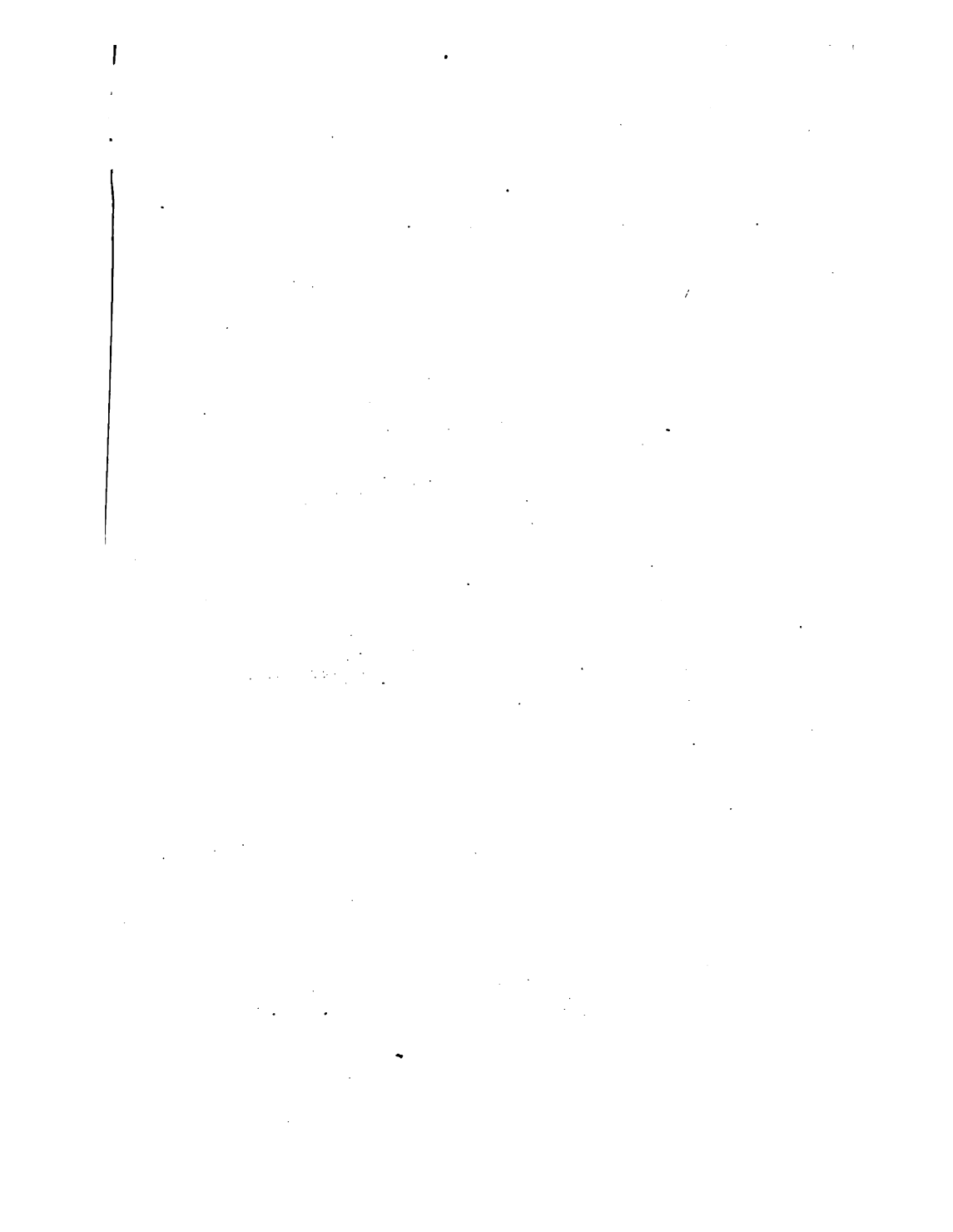
GATHERED LEAVES



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# SONGS AND POEMS.

BY  
ROWLAND BROWN.

*Fifth Edition.*



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DAVID BOGUE, 3 ST. MARTIN'S PLACE, W.C.

1881.

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# SONGS OF EARLY SPRING,

WITH

LAYS OF LATER LIFE;

COMPRISING

SONGS OF EARLY SPRING.

BY THE SEA.

LAYS OF LITTLE ONES.

IN SUMMER AND HAR-  
VEST DAYS.

WORDS FOR WORKERS.

IN WINTER DAYS.

GATHERED LEAVES.

HYMNS AND REST  
REVERIES.

---

\* \* *This Collection contains Sixty-five additions to the Volume, Third Edition (1872), and Fifty-one to the Fourth Edition (1875).*



*'Knowing that Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her: 'tis her privilege,  
Through all the years of this our life, to lead  
From joy to joy: for she can so inform  
The mind that is within us, so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,  
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith that all which we behold  
Is full of blessings.'*—WORDSWORTH.

## DEDICATION.

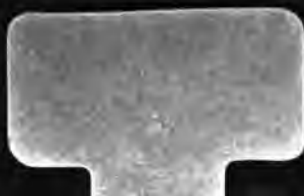
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THOU true Life-Angel, tender-hearted Wife,  
To thee I dedicate these simple lays,—  
To thee, who settest all the thoughts of life  
To Love's sweet music. Would that worthier bays  
I could entwine with thy belovèd name,  
Thou Joy of heart and home, dearer than minstrel's fame.

*Oxhey Grove, July 1872.*



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*\* \* Several of the poems contained in the first edition of  
'Songs of Early Spring' (1858) and 'Lily-Leaves' (1859),  
will be found in this collection under other sub-titles.*



## SONGS OF EARLY SPRING.

---

*' Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, its fears,  
To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.'*

WORDSWORTH.

---

### THE PURE IN HEART.



HE pure in heart their God shall see ;\*  
O promise sweet and sure !  
Blessed as angels men may be,  
If but their hearts be pure :  
This world becomes as bright a place  
As Heaven can be above,  
- To all who see the Father's face  
In Nature's works of love.

The Pure,—they have no need to wait  
Till Death shall round them glide ;  
They need not wait till heaven's gate  
The Lord shall open wide.

\* 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'—  
St. Matthew, v. 8.

Even on earth the sight is given,  
In all things good and fair ;  
In every flower and star of heaven  
They see God's presence there.

The beauties of the Vernal fields,  
And Summer's floral host ;  
The ripen'd fruits that Autumn yields,  
The Winter's snow and frost :  
These with ten thousand voices rise  
In chorus from the sod,  
Declaring what the fool denies  
Who saith ' There is no God ! '

Our sins alone these scenes defile,  
And mortal eyes obscure :  
The light of heaven's eternal smile  
Is seen but by the pure.  
God is as much ' our Father ' here  
As He in Heaven will be,  
And they who walk by faith sincere  
His love both know and see.

'Tis only for the pure and good  
Earth's sweetest music rings ;  
By them alone is understood  
The hymn Creation sings ;  
They know in darkness as in light  
Shines His all-glorious form ;  
They hear in sorrow's darkest night  
His voice amidst the storm.

Great Giver of all gifts divine,  
Grant pure desires to me,  
That on my earth-bound sense may shine  
The light that springs from Thee ;  
That I, more trusting, pure, and true,  
Adoring Thee may fall ;  
The Lord of Love may keep in view,  
And see my God in all.



REVERIES.

WALK we the garden in the year's young days,  
Before the earliest snowdrop reappears,  
Or crocus spreads its glittering oriflame,  
And, communing with Nature, we discern  
Truths that she later teaches by the light  
Of miracles reveal'd in beauteous flowers.

Behold, now in the dark and clouded day,  
'Neath the dead leaves her busy hand at work,  
Feeding flower-fibres with supplies they need  
Before the resurrection and the life,—  
Working in silence with the mystic sense  
Of conscious power that breeds omnipotence.

And, have we eyes to see, the rain-swamp'd ground,  
On which as yet no sign of Spring is found,

Supplies heart-courage for the dreary hour  
When unbelief, as dark as Winter clouds,  
Conceals the Sun of Righteousness from sight—  
When fades the light of heaven from doubt-dimm'd eyes,  
And hearts and lives are drear as flowerless fields.

Look deeper than the surface. Nature works  
Not for the superficial smile of man,  
But to fulfil a mission given of God,  
In silence, careless though unrecognised  
May be her handywork on root and bud—  
Teaching the poet re-assuring truth,  
If he be true to nature and to God,  
Thoughts he may utter, fructify unseen  
In human hearts, long ere the heaven-sown seeds  
Break forth in bud or flower in noble deeds.

Poor fool that judgest only by the Seen,  
Wouldst fathom Time and gauge Eternity,  
Surveying nature, measuring mankind,  
By some imperfect standard of the brain,  
By light of Reason pure and passionless,  
(Feeling and Fancy being dead at heart,)  
And in the pride of cold Philosophy  
Wouldst reconcile the mysteries of life ;  
The green bud of the bulb fresh from the sod,  
Pregnant with promises of future life,  
Confounds thy theories of men and God.  
The quickening influence which the flower-root stirs  
Supplies a problem for philosophers :

For who of these from the cold clod of earth  
Could give such beauty as the hyacinth's birth?  
Well, then, the sceptic heart may cease to beat,  
Such proof of resurrection at his feet!

Oh! for the touch of that creative Hand,  
By whom the mysteries of Life are plann'd,  
Upon my spirit, that from thence would start  
Thoughts that should blossom into poets' flowers,  
And wake devotion in the human heart;  
No worn-out phrases, like dead wither'd leaves  
Fluttering on last year's stalks, devoid of use,  
Lacking the soul and energy of life,—  
But thoughts conveying to the hearts of men  
As strong convictions of their lineage  
As the spring-flowers bring with them to the world!



WHERE ART THOU LOITERING,  
BEAUTIFUL SPRING?

OH! where art thou loitering, beautiful Spring?  
We yearn for thy presence to gladden the earth,  
To feel thy love-glances, to hear the birds sing  
Their carols of joy at the violet's birth.  
Oh! come, loiter not; and with heart-songs of praise  
We will greet the first gleam of thy glorious days.

Too long have we seen on the ground the white snow,  
Too long has been silent the rivulet's voice,  
Too long have we felt the chill winter-winds blow ;  
So we yearn for thy coming to make us rejoice.  
Return, then, again to thine own fairy dells,  
The haunt of the cowslips and bonnie blue-bells.

We are weary beholding embroider'd in ice  
The mystical semblance of beautiful flowers ;  
For who would compare the dead frozen device  
With garlands of beauty that breathe in thy bowers ?  
And pure though the snow-flakes of winter may be,  
Thy snowdrops, fair spirit, are best loved by me.

To the voice of Impatience fair Spring is not mute :  
'My spirit is with thee,' she says, 'though unseen ;  
My work, to be perfect, begins at the root.  
The bud must be fashion'd ere branch can be green ;  
The east wind, the dark cloud, the chill dripping  
shower,  
Are needful as sunlight to perfect the flower !'



### THE SNOWDROP.

THE stormy February blast  
Sweeps over all below,  
And Winter, with a brow o'ercast,  
Reigns o'er a realm of snow.

He riots on the graves of flowers ;  
His troops of storm and wind  
Have desolated Nature's bowers,  
Leaving but wrecks behind.

The birds and cattle cower in vain  
Beneath his biting breath ;  
Through hail and rain low wails of pain  
Beseech the tyrant's death.

But who, when this beleaguering king  
Doth most our hearts oppress,  
In saintliest white comes heralding  
The dawn of happiness ?

Who is the welcome messenger  
That, 'neath the driving sleet,  
Becomes so glad a harbinger  
Of hope and comfort sweet ?

Fair Snowdrop, with thy flag of truce,  
'Tis thou who seem'st to plead  
With Winter, and dost half induce  
His heart thy smile to heed.

In prayer I see thee bending low,  
That he would now disband  
The troops of wind, and frost and snow,  
That desolate the land.



He cannot long resist. Fair flower,  
The snow-wreath on thy breast  
Dissolves—sign of the mystic power  
By Modesty possess.

Take courage, this thy life should cheer  
(If thou canst conscious be)—  
Before all flowers of the year  
God has selected thee,

To preach the gladdest prophecies  
Of Resurrection near,  
Of loves restored to vernal skies,  
And bowers of beauty dear.

And, more than this, thou seem'st to speak  
This glorious truth—God-given—  
Ever the lowly and the meek  
Are favorites of Heaven.



#### THE ANGEL OF LIGHT.

SHE comes ! she comes ! the spirit of Spring,  
From the vale of the Shadow of Death,  
With songs that over the mountains ring,  
And kisses of balmy breath.

She comes ! and the storm-wind dies  
In a dream of wrathful floods,  
For the flash of her love-bright eyes  
Awakens the sleeping buds.

She comes, like an Angel of Light !  
Joy beams from her beautiful brow ;  
And her step, as she glides with delight,  
Falls softly as bloom from the bough.  
She speaks to the spirits of men —  
'I am come Earth's delights to restore ;'  
And forth from the desolate glen  
Ring sounds of rejoicing once more.

From the trees joyous melody falls,  
As the violet opens its eyes ;  
And a gladsome sense recalls  
The fondest hopes that rise.  
From the tenderest blade of grass  
To the skylark on the wing,  
Glad pæans of blessing pass—  
Thank God for the breath of Spring !



#### THE MISSEL-THRUSH.

LOUD sings the Thrush from the mistletoe bough,  
The first of the Bards of Spring ;  
And a glad refrain to a heart in pain  
Is the song he loves to sing.

'Dark clouds, ye may frown,  
And the storm may come down,  
But the Spring will be here by-and-by !'

The Snowdrops awake from the sleep of death,  
As they hear his mellifluous strain ;  
In robes of white like the angels' dight,  
They whisper, ' We live again ;'  
For though the winds blow,  
And fast falls the snow,  
The Spring will be here by-and-by !

And, ravish'd by sounds of his rapturous voice  
In the flash of the warm sunbeam,  
With a laugh that makes the woods rejoice  
Away breaks the meadow stream —  
'Oh, oh !' sings the Thrush  
As the waters rush,  
'The Spring will be here by-and-by !'

He lulls with a song the tempest high,  
Which buffets the budding tree ;  
And the rage of the March wind dies away,  
Till it dimples with kisses the sea.  
'Oh, oh !' sings the bird,  
'My songs have been heard ;  
So content I can live, love, and die !'



SEED-TIME.

Go forth, O Sower of Good ! and, sowing  
Now, whilst the life-giving breezes are blowing,  
Seed, that, the blessings of Heaven bestowing,  
    Maketh the desolate wilderness glad —  
Faith, Hope, and Charity, holiest graces —  
Scatter the seed in the heart's waste places ;  
Scatter it broadcast where evil disgraces ;  
    Sow in all hope for the joy of the sad.

Earth has too long in the winter been pining :  
Now, whilst the sun o'er all Nature is shining,  
Let the sad heart feel the cloud's silver lining ;  
    Now is the season, O Sower, to sow  
Heavenly desires for a purer existence,  
Faith that shall give the weak spirit assistance,  
Nerving the heart against sin, in resistance  
    To the dread phantoms that haunt us in woe !

In the drear valleys by error benighted,  
In the lives sin has long hopelessly blighted,  
Hearts that so ill all God's love have requited,  
    Scatter, O scatter Truth's golden seeds !  
Follow the Lord of the Harvest's direction ;  
He to the seed will give such resurrection,  
Angels shall stoop to pluck flowers of affection —  
    Heart-blooms of beauty, brave thoughts, noble  
    deeds.

What though the seed may seem dead in the furrow,  
What though the clouds may seem weeping in sorrow,  
Beauty shall gladden creation to-morrow ;

Sow ye in faith amidst doubt and despair.

What though some seed that ye sow seem to wither,  
Be not discouraged : good perisheth never ;  
God the seed quickens ; his flowers bloom for ever,  
In holiest action and fragrantest prayer !

Sow amongst lives that deceit is accursing ;  
Sow in the soul that for love is athirsting ;  
Sow in the heart that with sorrow is bursting :

Seed sown in sorrow brings harvest of joy ;  
Springeth up, glory and goodness expressing ;  
Giving to men joy that, angels possessing,  
Filleth all heaven with pæans of blessing ;—  
Fear not ! God's good seed earth cannot destroy.

As o'er the fresh wheat the skylarks are singing,  
When they, from green waves of beauty upspringing,  
Pour forth their exquisite songs of thanksgiving,

Hid in the cloud above earth's tear-wet sod ;  
So o'er the seed for which hearts are imploring,  
Angels the Lord of the Harvest adoring,  
Music of heaven in blessings outpouring,  
Give it increase to the glory of God !



TO THE CELANDINE.

BEAUTIFUL Celandine !  
Star of the Meadow ! shine,  
Piercing the darkness with heart-searching rays.  
Ere the young Spring's first flush  
Woos back the lark and thrush,  
Brightly thou peerest through Nature's drear ways.  
Blessings be on thy light,  
Flower-star of Promise bright ;  
Hesperus never dispell'd deeper gloom  
Than, when through storm and rain,  
Thou shinest forth again ;  
Lighting like Hope the green turf of the tomb !

Oh ! to souls bow'd with grief,  
Forth from each heart-shaped leaf,  
Whence thy star-buds spring with promise of joy,  
Light in life's darkness breaks,  
Promise of gladness wakes ;  
Thou dost the shadows of sorrow destroy,  
Leading Faith's trusting sight,  
With an unerring light,  
God's face to see in the flowers He has made,  
As did the Eastern Star,  
Which led the Magi far,  
Guiding them where the Redeemer was laid.\*

\* 'When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.'—St. Matthew, ii. 10.

Search we, but shall we find  
Message to mortal mind  
Dearer than thing of bright blessings in store ?  
Long may thy glory shine  
On this cold heart of mine,  
Making me love simple pleasures the more ;  
For, oh ! how drear would be  
Night of the soul to me,  
When God's fair flowers fail to wake pleasant dreams,  
When love has grown too old,  
When the heart feels too cold,  
Star of the Meadow ! to feel thy bright gleams.



### OH, TO BE YOUNG !

OH ! to be young, when the Spring birds are singing  
Welcomes of joy on the birthdays of flowers !  
When from the meadows such glories are springing,  
To Heaven seems akin this glad world of ours ;  
When the woods wake with a jubilant chorus,  
And joyously murmur the river and rill ;  
When the iris of Spring is expanded high o'er us,  
And beauty is laughing from valley and hill.

Oh ! dear are these days, when the Spring-blossoms  
cheer us,

To feel those emotions of freedom which rise,  
When all that we love on the earth are still near us,  
To lighten our path with their joy-beaming eyes.  
'Tis sweet to feel opening the buds of ambition,  
Resolving to do some magnanimous deed ;  
To stand undismay'd by the world's competition,  
Determin'd to enter Life's lists, and succeed.

And fair are our hopes ere the world has corrupted  
The first warm affections that bloom in the soul,  
Ere fashion has Nature's fresh streams interrupted,  
Or prejudice risen bright thoughts to control ;  
When religion means love—ere the faintest suspicion  
Of guile or hypocrisy crosses the mind ;  
But, beaming with hopes of a glorious mission,  
Our eyes are to Life's stern realities blind.

And, far more than this, how divine is the feeling  
When Love leads the soul to his spiritual heights,  
Disclosing unspeakable blessings, revealing  
His treasures exhaustless, undreamt-of delights !  
Then, ah ! when my brow Time's icy hand paleth,  
Though dark be the changes fresh years may unfold,  
When vigour departs and when memory faileth,  
O God, keep my spirit from e'er growing old !





## THE SONG OF THE WINDS.

ONWARDS ! Onwards ! Night and Day,  
Through the world we wend our way,  
Journeying with ceaseless haste  
O'er the hills and watery waste ;  
Every flower and blade of grass  
Trembles when our footsteps pass,  
And the waves of Ocean leap,  
Starting at our voice from sleep !  
Dost thou ask us where we go,  
Rushing on through sleet or snow ?  
Question thou the pathless deep,  
Or the mountain's mighty steep,  
Or the cavern's rocky cell,  
Fairy grot or flower-strewn dell,  
Or the fountain's bright cascades,  
Or the forest's leafy shades,  
Or the clouds of far-off skies ;  
Thus the voice of all replies :—  
' Though we feel them breathe and blow,  
Though we hear them loud and low,  
Yet in vain we seek to know  
Whence they come or where they go !'

Morning bright and twilight dim,  
Chanting an Æolian hymn ;  
Through the corridors of Night  
Passing like a phantom's flight ;

Bearing 'neath the moon's pale beams  
To the weary heavenly dreams ;  
Or impelling o'er the foam  
Hearts that yearn for love and home :  
Breathing in the ocean shells  
Music's sweet and potent spells.—  
God alone restrains our speed,  
Fleeter than the Arab steed :  
For at morn in Eastern Isles  
We behold Aurora's smiles,  
But at eve our pinions rest  
On the mountains of the West !

In the morning of the year  
Ye our clarion voices hear :  
Like a warder stand we then  
On the hill-tops o'er the glen ;  
There we wake the slumbering streams,  
And the snowdrops from their dreams,—  
Yes, invisibly we bring  
Back the children of the Spring,  
Till the emerald meadows ring  
With a shout heart-gladdening !

When, to greet her Summer Queen,  
Earth is robed in fairest green,  
Ah ! we change our names, for men  
Call us 'gentle Zephyrs' then.  
Lightly from the roses fair  
Waft we incense through the air ;  
And our kiss leaves blessing sweet

ds —

On lips parch'd with sultry heat,  
Gliding through her jasmine grove,  
Softly waft we strains of love :  
Breathing on the Poet's heart,  
Bidding flowers of song to start.

But from Summer bowers we rove  
Into Autumn's wither'd grove,  
And, aweary of the flowers,  
There display our mighty powers ;  
Oh ! the crimson falling leaf  
Would reproach us with its grief,  
But upon the World forlorn  
Laugh we with exultant scorn.

Then in Winter cold and chill  
Glide we o'er the purple hill,  
Striking dumb the prattling rill ;  
And the torrents hear our sighs,  
And the surging Sea replies,  
Breaking into waves, that cover  
With white cerements many a lover,  
Torn for ever from the reach  
Of hapless searchers on the beach.  
If thou think'st these idle boasts,  
Go thou to the wreck-strewn coasts,  
Where we pass'd like rushing hosts,  
And the relics scatter'd there,  
And the tokens of despair,  
Shall be proof, against our might  
Man is powerless to fight.

By whatever strength endow'd,  
Be his heart however proud,  
He, with forest, wave, and cloud,  
Must with secret consciousness  
Still the self-same truth confess—  
' Though we feel them breathe and blow,  
Though we hear them loud and low,  
Yet we vainly strive to know  
Whence they come or where they go !'



## THE WHITE VIOLET.

In the shadow of Death, with a wail of despair,  
A Mother knelt weeping in agonized prayer :  
' Great Father ! my little one spare thou to me,  
The one precious pearl of life's desolate sea.'  
But her cry rose in vain, for the spirit had fled,  
And the tears of the mourning one fell on the dead.  
Too lovely had grown this fair flower for earth,  
Too fair for the blight of the land of its birth ;  
So the Angel that watch'd o'er the babe from above,  
With his soft silken hair and sweet smile fell in love,  
And the joy which had been to the young mother  
    given  
Was wafted in glory to blossom in Heaven.

But when the Love-Angel pass'd up with the child,  
O'er the snow-cover'd meadows and moorland so wild,

A Robin, beholding the beautiful form,  
 Pour'd forth a wild song which was heard through  
     the storm ;—  
 ' Oh, comfortless leave not earth's desolate bowers,  
 But crown it again with a garland of flowers !  
 Oh ! leave of thy tarrying with us a sign,  
 Though it be on the snow but a foot-print of thine !'

The Angel's pure heart was with sympathy stirr'd,  
 And he heeded the wild pleading notes of the bird ;  
 For as one tear he dropt, lo ! that flower from the sod  
 Came forth which is clothed like the children of God.  
 The Violet white for the first time was seen,  
 The pearl of the Spring on the emerald green ;  
 And often it bloometh when earth is most drear,  
 To tell us that angels still visit us here !'



### FIRST PRIMROSES.

'Tis a glorious Resurrection, for the spirits of the  
     flowers  
 Awake from death to find their Heaven in Spring's  
     fresh vernal bowers ;  
 And light, and life, and melody, fill earth with so  
     much love,  
 To *them* it seems such paradise as we seek far  
     above.

Thus thought I, when I first beheld the primroses again,  
With patient faces smiling through the blinding tears  
    of rain ;  
I felt delight resembling his, who, watching through  
    the night,  
Beholds at length the first grey gleams that prelude  
    morning light.

Methought their spirits fondly said, 'We come, we  
    come from far,  
Bringing to men dear memories of the Bright, the  
    Morning Star ;  
The angels sent us down to earth, that we might  
    happy be  
In giving fragrance to the world and purer thoughts to  
    thee.

'We are first love-thoughts of the Spring, whose  
    fondly-loving heart  
Delights to banish wintry cares and blessings to  
    impart ;  
And with a garland of fair flowers she crowns the  
    infant years,  
That men might know God would not have this earth  
    a vale of tears.'

And thus, thought I, if, like the flowers we were but  
    good and true,  
So sinless in our lives and loves, and all we have  
    to do,

To us this world, for which our God has given such  
beauty birth,  
Would be a Heaven as fair as that we dream so far  
from earth!



### THE SKYLARK.

SEE, the flower-spangled banners of the Spring  
Wave from the branches of the forest trees,  
Touch'd by the viewless presence of the wind,  
That, like a spirit stray'd from Paradise,  
With silent footsteps treads the leafy aisles  
And tessellated pavement of wild flowers  
Of the green woods, breathing the breath of life,  
And wooing 'neath the gentle smile of Heaven  
The meek-eyed violet, reverent hyacinth,  
Sweet primroses, and pale anemones,  
Till the awakening buds of hawthorn boughs,  
A few days past buffeted by the blasts  
Of the departing Winter, wear a dress  
White as the spotless robes those angels wear,  
Led from great tribulation into joy!

Oh, with this breath of being blowing now,  
As from the gates of Heaven, all earth seems fill'd  
With poetry unutterably sweet—  
Stealing the heart from mercenary cares

By its enchantment. All the universe  
In the fair morning robes of early Spring  
Seems one vast orchestra, from which breaks forth  
A chorus welcome to the listening ear  
Of the Great Parent of all good, who loves  
To hear His children's and His creatures' praise.  
For lo! the sun, like the all-seeing eye  
Of the Omnipotent, with sacred love  
Piercing the bright blue curtain stretch'd above,  
Brightening, o'erflows with mercies infinite,  
And floods of blessing sheds in gracious rays  
Upon the furrow'd fields and hearts of men,  
Till flowers of beauty spring about our feet,  
Breathing fresh hopes and heavenliest promises.

But whilst I listen with heart-ravishment  
To the melodious harmonies of Spring,  
That fill the earth with such tumultuous glee,  
Above all voices there is one whose songs  
In high soprano notes now reach mine ear,  
Touching my heart with joy: 'tis thine, O Bird,  
That of all minstrels of the feather'd choir  
Seemest the favorite of Earth and Heaven;  
'Tis thine, O soaring Lark, that tell'st my soul  
The higher that its aspirations rise,  
Purer shall grow its harmonies of love.

O thou that singest thy sweet morning hymn  
With such exultant voice, thy path of light  
Is such as mine should be. I, wondering, strain  
Mine eyes to see thee; but thou art vanish'd far,



Lost in the snowy folds of yonder cloud,  
As on the bosom of an angel rock'd—  
Thy joy so great to find such place of rest,  
Thy spirit breaks forth into happier song.  
Thou teachest me how many glorious things  
Are hid from mortal sight, and wak'st a thought  
Of One who knew the sceptic heart, and said,  
'Blessèd are they who, seeing not, believe.'

Higher ! still higher soaring, singing bird,  
Thou seem'st to scale yon snowy mountain-tops  
Of cloudland, which divide the Earth from Heaven.  
I'd call thee back by some endearing name,  
If I could give expression to the love  
Thrilling my very being : but in vain  
Memory recalls the names which have been given  
By many a loving poet gone before ;  
All are unworthy, and I fain would know  
What angels call thee, for thy matchless notes  
Seem sung as much to angels as to men !  
Where didst thou learn such rapturous melodies ?  
Hast thou been listening at the gates of Heaven,  
And caught the echo of celestial harps,  
Whose music floods the golden streets with joy ?

O Bird, when thus thou roam'st the fields of light,  
Whilst poised above the world terrestrial—  
The glorious amphitheatre of hills,  
The pathless waters of the mighty deep—  
Before thee all the glories of the heavens,  
Beneath thee all the wonders of the earth,

I love to think that thou rememberest still  
One green oasis in the wilderness—  
Thy cherish'd nest, where now thy little ones,  
Fed with divinest food of matchless song,  
Hear thee, and find their pinions strengthening  
For the ethereal flight they soon will know.

This thought, O Bird, wakes tenderest memory  
Of a glad spirit, who one morn in Spring,  
Fresh with the dew of blessing on her head—  
A child of many prayers—from earth to God,  
Spreading the spirit's glad exultant wings,  
Went up to join in songs the angels sing.  
And my poor heart finds solace in the thought,  
That from the happy regions of the blest  
Her eyes, grown brighter with the light of Heaven,  
Sometimes gaze fondly down upon the earth,  
And single out one spot—the quiet nook  
Cradled among the hills she once called 'Home'—  
And that unseen as thou, O singing Bird,  
Her lips rain music on my thirsting heart,  
Feeding my soul with messages of love  
And holiest aspirations, raising me  
From grovelling thoughts of earth and earthly cares  
To seek the purer atmosphere of Heaven !

Bathed in the light of God, O singing Lark,  
The higher that thou soarest, more sublime  
And glorious grows thy music ; but when thou  
Descend'st from thy celestial journeying

To earth and earthly scenes, thy voice grows mute,  
The music of thy minstrelsy is hush'd !  
Thus dost thou give conviction to the thought—  
He that with joy would sing must keep near Heaven.



#### WILD FLOWERS.

THERE'S nothing that our God has given,  
In all this world of ours,  
So much reveals the love of Heaven  
As the beautiful wild flowers ;

By rill or roadside springing,  
But never out of place,—  
Waking the glad bird singing  
With their sweet looks of grace.

To the sorrowing wayfarer,  
The weary and the weak,  
Of an Almighty Carer  
Ever they seem to speak ;

Telling us, gracious teachers !  
' God comforts every lot,  
And would not that His creatures  
Should find one flowerless spot.'

And thus, if earth's waste places  
He fills with so much care,  
Would He have careworn faces  
And hearts sick with despair ?

All souls cannot be gardens  
Of cultivated flowers,  
But the Great Gardener pardons,  
If given the heart's best powers.

Would He that our religion  
Should be a joyless creed,  
A dark despairing vision,  
Mocking all human need ?

Oh ! no, our Heavenly Father,  
Who paints the wild flower's leaf,  
Loves smiles of gladness rather  
Than spirits bow'd with grief.

So nothing that our God has given,  
In all this world of ours,  
So much reveals the love of Heaven  
As the beautiful wild flowers !




## APRIL RAIN.

THE bright, the beautiful April rain,  
Comes from the bursting cloud again ;  
Scatter'd like pearls from bracelets bright  
Unstrung from the arms of the Spirits of light,  
    The fairies of love,  
    Who dwell above,  
And breathe on the world the Spring-breath of delight.

Oh ! it comes, it comes, in eloquent showers,  
Till earth, like a bride, puts on her flowers,—  
Till a garland as gay to the valley is given,  
As the rainbow that circles the brow of Heaven.  
    Hark ! hark ! how it drips,  
    As if fairy lips  
Joy-kisses were pressing upon the green leaves.

Oh ! it comes, and it melts like its sister, the snow,  
Into daisies and snowdrops, to cheer us below ;  
Then, who can help loving the beautiful rain,  
That teaches us nothing leaves Heaven in vain ?  
    And loves to reveal,  
    What happy hearts feel,  
All that's bright, blest, and beautiful, comes from above.



**THE CHILD AND THE GORSE.**

A CHILD gathering field-flowers beheld one sunny day  
The glittering mountain-gorse bloom. At once she  
threw away

The violet and primrose fresh gather'd, fair and sweet,  
And cast them by the wayside to be trampled under  
feet ;

But hear! a cry of anguish from the disappointed child,  
Who clutch'd too eagerly the flowers whose golden  
light beguiled :

The prickly gorse was thickly set with sharp and cruel  
thorn,

And the bleeding fingers of the child with smarting  
wounds were torn.

Children of larger growth, do not too much this folly  
blame ;

Think, with your secret well at heart, how much ye err  
the same.

How many let the simple flowers of God neglected fall,  
And, clutching Earth's false glittering flowers, lose  
hopes beyond recall —

Grasping with eager avarice, with blinded heart and  
brain,

The gleams of gold their folly dreams must be life's  
highest gain.

Think ye your hands shall pass unscath'd the thorns  
such flowers beset?—

Learn of the child who plucked the gorse, and lost the  
violet.

## TO THE THRUSH.

WARBLER, whose unpremeditated lays  
Fill with exultant mirth the leafy grove,  
To every ringing note of joyous praise  
I ravish'd listen, learning more to love  
The great Almighty Master, who can teach  
Music so far above all human speech !

Warbler, the humble minstrel learns of thee,—  
Content with his vocation—to forgive  
The carping critic whose best praise may be,—  
'Beyond a day such songs can never live ;  
Ephemeral snatches wasted powers employ,  
Which can but give a momentary joy.'

No higher praise the simple Bard would claim ;  
One true heart-'thank-you' for his simple lays  
Were worth a thousand trumpet-blasts of Fame  
Blown o'er his grave when deaf to human praise,  
His ears being fill'd with music far more blest,  
Heaven's high approvals—if he sang his best.



A SPRING THOUGHT.

O sunny-hearted Spring,  
Under your budding trees  
Whilst rapturous wood-notes ring,  
I, from the passing breeze,  
Would catch your melodies,  
And keep them in my heart  
To wake fond memories,  
When your love-smiles depart ;—  
Songs, in life's mid-day heat,  
I shall with joy repeat ;  
Or when the falling leaf,  
Touching my soul with grief,  
Shall lead my memory back  
Along your flower-strewn track !

I'd gather from your hedgerows  
Thoughts fresh as your first primrose,  
Violets of love and truth  
(Blossoms of early youth),  
These I would fadeless keep,  
No matter what changes sweep  
The Future's unknown way—  
That they, with their fragrant bloom,  
May light with their smile the tomb  
Of Love's and Life's decay !



## TO THE SPEEDWELL FLOWER.

PRETTY blue Speedwell, whose smile is not conceal'd  
In distant haunts of fern and flower with favorites of  
the field,  
But springest by the dusty road, that no one need  
pass by  
Regardless of the light of Heaven that shineth from  
thine eye.

With ever looking upwards thy flowers Heaven's hue  
have caught,  
And he who gave thy pretty name conceived a  
pleasant thought;  
For could a wiser heart-appeal life's way-worn tra-  
veller reach  
Than with thy name upon his lips finds utterance in  
speech?

Companion of the foot-sore through many a weary  
mile,  
God did not plant thee by the way that thou shouldst  
waste thy smile;  
He would not that the dusty roads of life should  
blind our eyes  
To blessings freely scatter'd in our pathway to the  
skies.

'Speed well,' (the Flower is made to say,) with strong  
and trusting soul,  
Resolved to find true peace at last—the only happy  
goal ;  
Not searching with absorbing thought Earth's guer-  
dons to pursue,  
Lest every step ye take make Heaven fade further  
from your view.

Avoid the dust and mire that cling in much-  
frequented roads ;  
The slippery path will surely make thrice cumber-  
some your loads :  
The straight, undeviating way be yours ; with willing  
mind,  
Keep Heaven and God before you, and human  
wrong behind.

'Speed well,' not treading life's rough road to  
trample under feet  
The flowers of God, whose fragrant prayers would  
make existence sweet ;  
Nor yet with such blind, hurried haste, ye have no  
time to heed  
The cry for aid from wearier ones who help and  
comfort need.

Speed *well*—so on the road of life ye will not turn  
aside  
From the wretched or despairing with scorn or sinful  
pride ;

Nor think the humblest duty vain, nor spurn the  
common task,  
Nor do a deed on which in prayer no blessing ye can  
ask.

Speed *well*—both thought and mind keep pure ; vain  
folly will it be  
To raise the dust of Doubt, and then complain ye  
cannot see.  
Speed well ! make ye the road of life a pathway  
bravely trod,  
Leading your footsteps daily nearer home to Heaven  
and God.



#### TO THE CUCKOO.

BIRD of the sunny Spring,  
Oh ! thou art heralding  
Moments that soon will bring  
Roses loved well.  
Violets and cowslips blow,  
Blue-bells and fern-leaves grow,  
Where a short while ago  
Icicles fell.

Up from the sunny dells  
Comes thy glad voice, that tells  
Tidings as dear as bells  
    Chimed on God's day ;  
For when we hear thy strain,  
Well, well we know again,  
Past is chill Winter's reign,  
    Death, and decay !

Oh, that our hearts were stirr'd  
More by thy tidings, bird,  
Seeing how but one word  
    Comforts the sad !  
So that, amidst the drear,  
We too, dispelling fear,  
Whisper'd a word of cheer,  
    Lives making glad !



## FLOWERS.

CALL not this earth a wilderness, it is so full of flowers ;  
A thousand things of joy spring up in Nature's smiling  
    bowers ;  
About the sunny hill-side, the garden, and the glen,  
God sends his messages of love to cheer the hearts of  
    men.

Go forth, with Faith thy bosom guest—the bleakest  
heath will yield  
Some fair, perchance neglected flower, a miracle  
reveal'd;  
And, welcome to patrician halls as to the peasant's  
door,  
The flowers, the lovely flowers, are blest of Heaven  
for evermore.

And if we read aright the lines traced on their petals  
gay,  
We never more shall cast a leaf with thoughtlessness  
away;  
But praises from our hearts will with their purer  
fragrance rise,  
That still such emblems have been left of a vanish'd  
Paradise.

So eloquent of Heaven, they come with such celestial  
powers,  
That all in life we've loved the best our hearts have  
named them 'Flowers :'  
For even He before whose love man's best affections  
pale,  
Is call'd the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Vale.

Eternal as all blessed things, each year they come  
and go,  
With no blind hurry, no delay ; and yet we love them  
so,

Because we feel direct from God these sacred gifts are  
given,  
As links in that bright chain which draws our spirits  
nearer Heaven.

Oh ! when I think what earth would be without their  
smiles of light,  
My heart is touch'd with gratitude and tenderest  
delight ;  
And while their fragrance steals away sad thoughts in  
sorrowing hours,  
I think how good it was of God to bless the earth  
with flowers.



### THE MINSTREL BOY.

ONE merry morn in the month of May,  
When woods were white with fragrant thorn,  
And all things kept glad holiday,  
The Minstrel Boy was born.

The heaven-bound lark soar'd high above  
The favour'd spot that gave him birth,  
Bidding good fairies come with love  
To bless the new-born child of earth.

The violet to the primrose spake  
The secret, and the rippling brook  
Rush'd to the lilies of the lake,  
Singing through many a ferny nook.

And through the reeds the tidings spread,  
Until they reach'd a fairy throng,  
Who to the distant forest sped,  
Waking the woods with jocund song.

And as they pass'd o'er field and brake,  
O'er mountain height and shining river,  
The birds gave welcome. For their sake  
The flowers with rapture seem'd to quiver.

And when towards the dell they came  
Where Mother Nature nursed the child,  
They heard the new-born stranger's name,  
And, blessing, on the infant smiled.

With love they kiss'd his fair white brow ;  
The mother's bosom throb'd with joy,  
Beholding them bend meek and low  
Over the cradle of her boy.

As half afraid to break his sleep,  
The flower-spirits of the glen  
Whisper'd, 'Good fairies, guard and keep  
This child from sinful stain of men.'

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*SONGS OF EARLY SPRING.*

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And tenderer words the fairies heard,  
Borne from a lonely fern-green spot,  
Where, by the troubled waters stirr'd,  
Blossom'd the blue forget-me-not.

Its very name became a prayer  
The fairies vow'd to keep in mind,  
And promised search through earth and air  
Some fitting natal gift to find.

So from the sycamore they took  
A branch, which fashioning complete,  
They made a tiny pipe. The brook  
Bore it towards the mother's feet.

She took it thence with wondering gaze,  
The fairies' gift, whose magic worth  
From Heaven itself should win sweet praise,  
And wake enchantment upon earth.

The mother, secret year by year,  
Conceal'd the gift her child possest;  
While he grew fairer and more dear,  
Waking fond dreams within her breast.

At length, when he a fearless boy—  
A bold, brave-hearted, passionate one—  
Stood forth, her glory and her joy,  
To greet his sixteenth May-dawn's sun,



Then brought she forth the fairies' prize,  
The gift since that first May conceal'd ;  
And at his touch, with strange surprise,  
Sweet music through the valley peal'd.

Sweet music floated down the glade,  
And pass'd o'er earth, and air, and sea ;  
Orpheus such music never made,  
When wailing for Eurydice.

The very lark paused in mid-flight,  
The thristle stopp'd his liquid lay ;  
And, ravish'd by the strange delight,  
The hawk forgot its hunted prey.

The flashing waterfall stood still,  
With voice subdued, lest it should break  
The spell of music—with sweet thrill  
The lilies trembled on the lake !

The fairies came rejoicing now  
Forth from their haunts of river-reeds,  
And bringing flowers to deck his brow,  
They danced in rings upon the meads.

He play'd—and to the pallid cheek  
Wan with despair, with deep lines graven  
By woes too deep for words to speak,  
Smiles broke like sunbeams out of Heaven.

He play'd—and Hate begot Remorse,  
And thoughts of baseness lost their sway :  
Vanquish'd by Music's subtle force,  
Malignant hopes were swept away.

He play'd—from mists of doubt and sin,  
Like gilded spires against the skies,  
Faith, Hope, and Courage rose within,  
And joy-tears flooded Sorrow's eyes.

Age half forgot the scourge of Time,  
And, raptured by the heaven-born strain,  
Drank of the elixir sublime,  
Which brings youth to the heart again.

He play'd—and Love would steal around  
Sad hearts, by grief or pain oppress :  
His home—men called it 'hallow'd ground,'  
For there the weary soul found rest.

The chords of Love his touch obey'd :  
His notes such memories could recall,  
That even in autumn when he play'd  
The forest leaves forgot to fall.

Through all the land the Minstrel's name  
Above all names became endear'd :  
Kings at his feet cast bays of Fame—  
The people flatter'd, fawn'd, and fear'd !

But many a tongue deceived with lies,  
And cursèd Genii led him down,  
From Truth's fair heights and sunlit skies  
Towards an evil-haunted town.

He who had only breathed from youth  
Home and affection's violet breath,  
Forsook the pleasant path of truth,  
And walk'd the dreaded streets of Death.

The false pretence was—' *Come, and we  
Will show you Life. You waste your powers  
'Midst scenes of dull simplicity,  
Singing among the birds and flowers !'*

At first, with step serene and bold,  
Unscath'd 'midst follies of the street,  
He moved : where souls were bought and sold,  
His 'lays grew every day less sweet.

For in his heart, in place of love  
Of simple flowers his mother taught,  
A cursed desire tower'd high above  
All other care, all other thought.

Fallen as from heaven a falling star—  
In vain his anguish'd mother cried  
'Come back !' He wander'd yet afar,  
Till she, heart-sick with sorrow, died.

He heard her fate without a tear ;—  
For when the cursèd thirst for gold  
Seizes the heart, the true, the dear,  
Dies frozen in the fatal cold.

At length—O woe, for such disgrace !—  
He stood up in the crowded mart ;  
Nor shame abash'd the once fair face,  
Nor sorrow seized his heart.

And to the crowd for gold he play'd,  
But, lo ! in that accursèd hour  
His last good Angel fled dismay'd—  
The fairy-gift lost half its power.

So one day, with blaspheming tongue,  
(The while for gold his spirit yearn'd,)  
From him the magic pipe he flung,  
Praying it might to gold be turn'd !

The elves that moment wrought the spell—  
The pipe no more made music sweet :  
Changed to a bar of gold it fell  
Heavily at the Minstrel's feet !

Gold-light so dazzling smote him blind  
In flashing on his mental sight ;  
And densest darkness dull'd the mind  
Illumed before with heav'nliest light.

He built himself a castle grand ;  
Sycophants cringed beneath his smile ;  
They call'd him 'noble' in that land,  
And thought his sorrows to beguile.

With daintiest fare his board was spread ;  
Jewels flash'd from his robes of state ;  
But in his soul a spectre dread  
Pursued like an avenging Fate.

He soon grew weary of the round  
Of sensuous pleasures ; and one day  
He said, ' I'll seek the hallow'd ground  
From which in youth I turn'd away.'

But when he came to grove and field  
To seek again their long-lost grace,  
The violet would no fragrance yield —  
The smile was gone from Nature's face.

His ears were stopp'd ; the soaring lark  
In vain sang loud its roundelay ;  
The home of early joys look'd dark ;  
The hills, once green, grew blank and grey.

In vain he cried to fount and grove,  
To bird and flower, to wave and wind,  
To give again the vanish'd love  
Which once he never fail'd to find.

E'en Echo heeded him not now :  
A mocking laugh came down the breeze,  
Answering his heart's cry. Leaf and bough  
Scornfully moved upon the trees.

Of no avail the pipe he brought,  
Of amber, ivory, and gold ;  
Vain was the fond delusive thought,  
With such to wake the joys of old.

Earth's simple flowers knew not such art ;  
The birds were startled at such sound ;  
And where was once but joy of heart  
Sorrow and death alone were found.

So, vex'd, he turn'd to men again :  
But now with age his brow was bent ;  
Men only mock'd his cry of pain—  
His never-ceasing life-lament.

So when Death, beckoning, drew near,  
To ford with him the silent river,  
Without one blessing in his ear  
He pass'd into the dread Forever !



## MUSIC.

BLESSED be God for Music ! Oh, sweet sound  
Falls on my spirit like the dew from heaven  
Upon the thirsting plant in the parch'd ground,  
By which new joy, the light of life, is given.

For when I hear it with its sister Song,  
Often the joy-tears overflow mine eyes,  
And from my raptured heart a countless throng  
Of yearning hopes and aspirations rise.

Solemnly slow, impressive, or consoling,  
I love to hear it flood the sacred aisles ;  
The voluntary from the organ rolling,  
Or hymns which listening angels hear with smiles.

Each dulcet note is as a rosebud cast  
Upon my path—I feel its incense rise,  
And strive to hold the ethereal flow'ret fast,  
Until, in echoes faint, it undulating dies.

God, when He made the world so beautiful—  
Bright skies, fair flowers, and the majestic sea—  
Knew that this world, though vast and wonderful,  
With all its grandeur would not perfect be,

Until He gave to earth its soul of sound.  
Go forth, and hear the mighty waves of Ocean  
Pour forth their grand *Te Deum* : they redound  
With Music, waking spiritual emotion.

Yes, God created Music ! He, whose voice  
Controls the whirlwind—the Mighty, the Forever !  
Who bade the Morn and Evening to rejoice,  
And the bright Stars for joy to sing together.

And to the Flowers He gave a voice—how know we  
That fragrance is not Music, so refined,  
So soft, so gentle, that the Angels only  
Can hear the sound, unknown to mortal mind ?

For there is Music in all things we love :  
In the clear laugh of unaffected glee ;  
In the kind word which, like the gentle Dove,  
Beareth the olive-branch across Life's troubled sea,

Sweet is the Æolian Music of the Night—  
The Summer wind invisible, which lingers  
Around the myrtle-trees and rosebuds bright,  
And harps upon the boughs with unseen fingers ;—

The voice of birds, glad minstrels of the wild-wood ;  
The hum of bees, which brings so fondly back  
A thousand dreams and fancies of our childhood—  
Of friends who smile no more upon our track.

Blessèd be God, that when the groves of Eden  
Lost their primeval grandeur, and Earth's flowers  
Were set with thorns, He did not take from men  
The heavenly solace, Music's softening powers.



He knew without it drear this world would be ;  
And gazing down the corridor of ages  
To the great portals of eternity,  
He saw the tears that stain'd the Future's pages ; —

He knew how many a time the spirit weary  
Would be refresh'd, the eye of sorrow brighten —  
The power that it possess'd to cheer the dreary —  
He knew how many a bosom's care 'twould lighten.

He knew how many a cheek, with suffering pallid,  
Would feel a flush of pleasure at its voice ;  
How many a sinking spirit would be rallied,  
How many a mourning one it would rejoice.

And he endow'd it with still holier powers,  
To waken in the heart pure thoughts of bliss,  
To steal the soul from love of withering flowers,  
And bear our thoughts to regions far from this —

To realms where discord can disturb us never ;  
Where no rude voices break the spells of song ;  
But where unwearied we shall hear for ever  
The sacred harpings of an Angel throng !



## THE SWALLOW.

O Swallow ! bonnie bird, I'll sing a welcome now to  
thee,  
Who comest with exultant wings across the billowy  
sea :  
But wherefore dost thou come to us from brighter  
lands than ours ?  
Say, is it love that makes thee fly back to thy native  
bowers ?

Thou comest from a sunny clime, where the soft  
zephyr's sigh  
Wafts odours of the orange-flowers, beneath a cloud-  
less sky ;  
Where, like a brilliant shower of pearls, down many a  
grotto's side,  
With music sweet as minstrel's song, the crystal waters  
glide.

Who bade thee leave the sunny South, or taught  
thee there to know  
No longer round thy own home-nest, the Winter blasts  
would blow ?  
Could no new ties there thou hadst form'd prevail on  
thee to stay—  
Who gave thy heart its yearnings for the land so far  
away ?

Sweet bird ! thou heard'st the voice of God, wherever  
thou didst roam,  
'Twas He sustain'd within thy heart the deathless  
love of home ;  
And underneath the frowning skies, above the bub-  
bling wave,  
With strength He nerved thy fluttering wings—He  
made thee bold and brave.

And, seeing thou hast safely pass'd the perils of the  
sea,  
I know the faith that made thee strong sufficient is  
for me—  
With steadfast soul to keep the sense of Heaven's  
directing Hand,  
And learn, though Earth is very fair, 'tis not the  
Promised Land.

Then welcome, bonnie bird, I will not love thee less,  
that thou  
Again wilt leave us when the flowers shall perish on  
the bough.  
Where'er thou goest thy true Home thou'lt ever keep  
in view—  
So teach me, God, to hear Thy voice, and, like Thy  
bird, be true.



## THE FAVOURITE NAME.

THERE is a sweetly simple name,  
Which hath a mystic spell,  
Unknown to Fortune or to Fame,  
Yet Memory guards it well.  
'Tis graven deep, in letters bright,  
Upon that secret scroll  
Where none but Love's blest names are traced—  
The tablet of the Soul.

I never feel it on my lips  
In hours of toil or pain,  
But thoughts of Peace, like violets smile  
When bless'd with April rain.  
And, oh! enshrined with jealous care,  
This talisman within  
Preserves me in Temptation's hour  
From many a snare of sin.

Blest is the heart to which a name  
So favour'd has been given,  
As hers, which *first* on bended knee  
I breathed in prayer to Heaven.  
For, oh! this is the star of Thoughts,  
Which sheds a light divine—  
This name, so very dear, will soon  
Be garlanded with mine.

## ORANGE-FLOWERS.

'Tis said, the orange-flowers thou wilt wear ;  
That from the home of childhood thou wilt pass,  
To prove thy chosen *one* heart of the world,  
Whose smile of love to thee is all in all.

Go forth, O maiden ; bud of promise fair,  
On which in fondness beams a mother's eyes,  
Watching each leaf of loveliness expand—  
Go forth, and blossom as the perfect wife !

Go forth, O blessed flower of womanhood !  
With all the graces Virtue calls her own,  
And keep their fragrance pure as sanctity,  
Wherewith to sweeten ever heart and home.

Go forth, O maiden ! as a Heaven-blest bride,  
And, for each kiss of those thou bid'st farewell,  
May from the heart of thy Beloved spring up  
Joys of affection, fadeless as the stars.

Be Love the guardian-angel of thy life !  
In whose bright footprints evermore shall spring  
Blossoms that ripen into Angel-fruits  
And be Thy ways the paths of perfect peace !

For a fond mother's glance, a sister's voice,  
A brother's strong affection, mayst thou find,  
Concentrated in one true, trusting heart,  
All that is known in heaven and earth by love.

Go forth ; and may the blessing of the bard,  
And sacred benediction of the priest,  
And prayers that fall from lips of those that love,  
Be heard, and answer'd by a sign from God !



## MARRIAGE LINES.

FLOWERS for the Bride, for whom to-day ascends our  
loving prayer,  
That He who clothes the lily will guard her with His  
care ;  
Will keep her heart His garden, where ever shall be  
found  
The saintliest flowers of faith and hope that bloom on  
hallow'd ground.  
That, with His blessing on her life, her joys may more  
increase ;  
And 'all her ways be pleasantness, and all her paths  
be peace !'



## ORANGE-FLOWERS.

To still the orange-flowers thou wilt wear ;  
 That from the home of childhood thou wilt pass,  
 To prove thy chosen ~~our~~ heart of the world,  
 Whose smile of love to thee is all in all.

Go forth O maiden ; bud of promise fair,  
 On which in freshness beams a mother's eyes,  
 Waiting each leaf of loveliness expand—  
 Go forth and blossom as the perfect wife !

Go forth O blossoming flower of womanhood !  
 With all the graces Virtue calls her own,  
 And keep their fragrance pure as sanctity,  
 Wherewith to sweeten ever heart and home.

Go forth O maiden ! as a Heaven-blest bride,  
 And for each kiss of those thou bid'st farewell,  
 Now from the heart of thy Beloved spring up  
 Love's immortal smileless as the stars.

Be thou the guardian angel of thy life !  
 By whose bright footsteps evermore shall spring  
 Blessings that open like Angel-fruits  
 And lead us to the paths of perfect peace !

Be a child mother's glance, a sister's voice,  
 A brother's strong affection mayst thou find,  
 Unconquered in our true trusting heart,  
 Of that is known in heaven and earth by love.

Go forth ; and may the blessing of the bard,  
 And sacred benediction of the priest,  
 And prayers that fall from lips of those that love,  
 Be heard, and answer'd by a sign from God !



## MARRIAGE LINES.

FLOWERS for the Bride, for whom to-day attends our  
 loving prayer,  
 That He who clothes the lily will guard her with His  
 care ;  
 Will keep her heart His garden, where love shall be  
 found  
 The saintliest flowers of faith and hope that bloom on  
 hallow'd ground.  
 That, with His blessing on her life, her joy may more  
 increase ;  
 And 'all her ways be pleasant, and all her paths  
 be peace !'



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## GOING HOME.

OPEN the window—the bright sunbeams glisten,  
Like golden-wing'd birds on the leaves of the trees ;  
Open the window, and, sister dear, listen—  
Again, as from Heaven, comes the voice on the  
breeze.

Last night, when I heard it, I thought 'twas the zephyr  
That kiss'd the dew-tears that the myrtle-flowers wept,  
Or the murmuring meadow-stream lulling the lilies ;  
But it came all night long in my dreams when I  
slept.

Yes, yes, sister dearest, I hear a glad chorus,  
And this seems the song that is breath'd on the air—  
'The glorious region of love lies before us ;  
And, sister, dear sister, we soon shall be there.'

One voice in the chorus distinctly grows clearer—  
'Tis mother's ; she calls me her 'dear child' again :  
The same tender voice, but unspeakably dearer ;—  
Oh Death, thou hast lost thy last terror and pain !  
I hear it ! my soul will not part with the token,  
That she will be first then to welcome me Home,  
Where never a heart by a false tongue is broken—  
Oh ! listen,—the voice sings more audibly, 'Come !'  
And round me, above me, swells higher the chorus ;  
The sunlight grows brighter,—the blue sky more fair ;  
The golden gates, sister, swing open before us ;  
The music grows louder—we soon shall be there !

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IN HEAVEN.

FORGET her ! alas ! the glad voice of the Spring,  
That tells me the dark reign of Winter is o'er,  
Seems only a sadder remembrance to bring  
Of the light of the heart that can reach me no more.

Though the nightingale sings to the rose the same lay,  
To Love's raptur'd music as true as last year ;  
Though the chestnut hangs out its green banners as gay,  
And the blue-bells and fern-leaves as joyous appear :

Yet there comes, with the tones of the river and wind,  
A murmur disconsolate, touching my pain :  
With all Spring restores, she no solace can find,  
Or give to the heart its lost angel again.

Then nearer I draw to the waters, where brightly  
Are mirror'd the far-away clouds of the sky,  
Which seem like the mantles of angels, who lightly  
Float on in an ocean of glory on high.

Forget her ! O Thou, who know'st how I still love her,  
Thou who, in Thy mercy, for solace hast given  
Those thrills of deep joy when my footsteps pass over  
The daisies once press'd by that angel in Heaven ;

Thou know'st in my memory, nearer and dearer,  
Her voice can alone wake a solace for me ;  
And I feel, whilst enraptured in spirit I hear her,  
As near to the angels as here I can be.

For I know, though my Love has pass'd Eden's bright  
portals,  
Though crowns of a seraph her fair brow entwine,  
Nor glories of Heaven, nor love of immortals,  
Can ever estrange her pure spirit from mine.



### SPIRIT ECHOES.

I LOVE the gems in the crown of Night,  
And I love the pearls of the sea ;  
And the violet-breath of the spring-time bright  
Wakes deep delight in me.  
I love the wild flowers kiss'd by the breeze,  
And I love the birds on the bough ;  
And I love the whispering leaves of the trees,  
And the dew on the young Morn's brow.  
I love the voice of the child of song,  
Of the wave and the waterfall ;  
But there's One, in the glorious world above,  
That I love far more than all !

I love the smile on a child's fair face,  
The light and the joy of home ;  
And a mother's and sister's fond embrace,  
To greet me when I come.  
I love the grasp of an honest hand,  
And a true friend's kindly word ;  
And I love the sympathizing band  
Whose hearts by a tear are stirr'd.  
I love the sound of Affection's voice,  
And lips from which blessings fall ;  
But there's One, in the glorious world above,  
That I love far more than all.



## EARLY PIETY.

THE fairest presence Earth may see  
Brighten its sorrow-furrow'd sod,  
Is surely Early Piety !  
We know the path that she has trod,  
By scatter'd violets of God.

We see upon her placid brow  
The morning-star of Heaven shines clear ;  
And sweetest music is the vow  
Breathed from her lips with faith sincere —  
Sounds listening angels joy to hear.

She seeks no smile from men—she knows  
No secret fear of human power;  
But on her way rejoicing goes :  
Of Spring the very fairest flower,  
Transplanted from celestial bower.

She walks by Faith with Christ beloved ;  
The children kiss her gentle hand ;  
The sinful, by her look reproved,  
With tearful eyes around her stand—  
Her talk is of the Better Land.

Her lips with precious promise move,  
With words of winning, modest grace ;  
And eyes blind to the ways of love  
Deplore with tears their own disgrace,  
Seeing the angel in her face.

To every home by children blest  
God send her spirit from the skies,  
There to abide an angel-guest,  
To bless, to soothe, to sympathize,  
And breathe the breath of Paradise.



## SIR RONALD.

Now, sister, can you tell me why  
Sir Ronald seems so kind to be ;  
And why he never passes by,  
Without he stops to speak to me ?

I often meet him in the lane,  
The lane you said was loved so well  
By sister Alice, ere she went  
With angels up in Heaven to dwell.

I met him there last night, when I  
Gather'd the violets white and blue :  
He ask'd me if I'd give to him  
The flowers I gather'd then for you.

And springing from his horse, he said,  
' Darling, I'll take you for a ride.'  
And then he raised me in his arms,  
And gently press'd me to his side.

And slowly up the lane we rode ;  
But when he look'd upon my face,  
He faintly whisper'd, ' Yes, it is—  
It is the same dear smile of grace ;

' The same low voice, the same blue eyes :  
Thank God, one like her has been given !  
Is she an angel in disguise,  
Sent down to talk with me of Heaven ?'

I do not think he thought I heard ;  
For when I said, 'Whose voice, whose smile ?'  
He seem'd to start, and on my neck  
I felt a burning tear the while.

He did not tell me what he meant ;  
He seem'd as if he could not speak ;  
And only press'd a loving kiss,  
So soft, so gently on my cheek.

And when towards our gate we came  
(The gate, you know, was open wide),  
I said, 'Why do you never come,  
As once you came, ere Alice died ?'

I told him that our China-rose  
Had just begun again to bloom ;  
And that the little linnet still  
Came for the crumbs to sister's room.

But when again of her I spoke,  
I felt his lips my forehead touch ;  
And such a sigh came from his heart,  
I'm sure he loved her very much.

But tell me, sister, what he meant  
When on my face his gaze he kept ?  
And why, when I of Alice spoke,  
He press'd my hand the while, and wept ?



## THE BUTTERFLY'S VOYAGE.

GAY Butterfly, that darest to pursue  
Some realm of fancy o'er the waters blue,  
And dost the beauty of the land forsake  
To chase the changing shadows of the lake ;  
What hope allures thee thus so far to roam  
From the companions of thy leafy home ?  
Why dost thou leave the haunt of fern and flower ?  
Seekest thou o'er the deep a fairer bower  
Than thou canst find in sheltering woods so near,  
Fringing with beauty glorious Windermere ?  
Listen ! The lilies that delight to lave  
Their pure leaves in the margin of the wave,  
Appeal, with looks of love, that thou shouldst stay,  
Nor trust thyself upon an unknown way.

Be still, vain theorist ! this butterfly,  
That thou beholdest with a pitying eye,  
Chasing the changing shadows of the lake,  
Is a true type of thee, if thou wouldst make  
All joys contingent on Eternity,  
Ignoring light and love surrounding thee.  
Lift up thyself, for blessings spring like flowers  
In paths neglected. Oh ! this world of ours  
Was never made so beautiful, that we,  
Perilling all upon an unknown sea,  
Should mar the blessings we of earth possess  
By restless dreams of future happiness.  
God's lilies floating round the souls of men  
Appeal for love, from things beyond our ken.



## EASTER HYMN.

WELCOME, fair Easter dawn !  
No festival in all the Christian year  
Is consecrated by such memories dear :  
The shade of Death is gone ;  
From Nature's sepulchre is roll'd away  
The stone that mark'd the season of decay.

With joy we see appear  
Two Angels, Love and Light, rise from the tomb,  
No more we stoop to weep o'er buried bloom—  
Death is not here.  
The glorious revelation, all may read  
In grove and bower, 'The Lord is risen indeed!'

The Lord of Life is risen !  
The quickening sense of resurrection-joys  
The drear remembrances of death destroys,  
And from the gates of Heaven  
The Sun of Righteousness dispels the grief  
Of those who mourn'd erewhile the fallen leat.

Even like Mary, we  
May think our Lord the Gardener : so sweet  
The early blossoms scatter'd at our feet.  
Oh ! surely they must be  
Devised by Him who said, when death was rife,  
'I am the Resurrection and the Life.'

Far up the azure skies,  
To Him, who smiles in sunshine through the cloud,  
From worshippers in adoration bow'd  
Not only now should rise,  
With organ peal, the loud thanksgiving hymn  
From consecrated aisle or cloister dim ;

But through the temple fair  
Built without hands, whose dome, the firmament,  
Over the floor of flowers is grandly bent,  
A universal prayer  
Should go to God, that human love be made  
Worthier the gifts by Him to man convey'd!




### THE CITY BIRD.

BIRD, art thou mocking me  
With thy wild strain of joy in this strange place?  
Is it the memory  
Of the glad visions of the happy Past,  
Crowding upon thy heart,  
That makes thee sing  
With such exultant voice?

What meanest thou,  
Poor prisoner in the dull and dusty streets,  
By such sweet strains?  
Art thou unconscious of the passing scene,

And borne away  
On Fancy's wild, voluptuous wings of joy,  
Soaring again o'er meadows blossom-strewn,  
Where the young Spring hath shaken from her wings  
The daisies white?  
Dost thou now dream thou art free,  
And, wafted by the soft, mysterious wind,  
Soaring to Heaven,  
Far, far above the silver rivulet,  
Upon whose mossy banks  
The tender blue forget-me-nots, with smiles,  
Whisper their wooing words  
To the young violets, whose eyes are dimm'd  
With dewy tears of loving ecstasy?

Blithe bird, I envy thee;  
I stand rebuked by the wild gush of song  
Which haunts and answers me.  
Thou know'st contentment; and thou teachest me  
My mission still un murmuring to fulfil,  
To raise my voice, e'en though bereft of love;  
To cheer the weary, struggling up the steep  
Of life's dark, rugged mounts;  
And though, surrounded by a careless crowd,  
A thoughtless multitude,  
True to the mission Heaven has ordain'd,  
Forget life's prison-bars,  
And soaring on the spirit's mystic wing,  
Pour forth with thee a glad thanksgiving hymn  
For all the mercies God in love vouchsafes.





## BY THE SEA.

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*'With thee, great Ocean, would I long to be,  
Again to rest upon thy shell-strewn shore ;  
To list, like lover, to the melody  
Of thy dear voice ; in dreams once more  
To spend old hours with thee, and to behold  
Thy face, reflecting Heaven, as of yore.'*

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## SUNRISE.



MIDST the glorious chain of hills  
I loved in youth to climb,  
Towers one above the deep blue sea,  
As if it challenged Time  
To leave a wrinkle on its brow,  
Majestic centuries past as now.

The people call it 'Golden-cap,'  
Because about its head  
The earliest radiance of the dawn  
Is like a halo shed ;  
And, lit with Morning's primal blaze,  
Eye on no fairer scene can gaze.

To see the Sun's first golden ray  
This hill with glory crown,  
Lilla and I at break of day  
Towards the beach went down.  
The pure Wind on her cheeks, with bliss,  
Left roses with its matin kiss.

Grand as when, in primeval dawn,  
God said, 'Let there be light,'  
Unalter'd by Time's countless storms,  
The red, round Sun rose bright ;  
And o'er the waters, as in love,  
The Spirit of Heaven seem'd to move.

Yea, glorious as the gates of Heaven,  
Each wave gleam'd like a gem,  
Bright as the jasper walls that gird  
The new Jerusalem,  
Having God's glory for its light,—  
And so it seem'd to Lilla's sight.

For, looking up with earnest eyes,  
She gravely question'd me—  
Pointing first to the path of light  
Far out across the sea.  
She said, (such radiance there was given,)  
'Father, is that the path to Heaven?'

I answer'd, (though the question fill'd  
My spirit with surprise,)  
'My child, beyond the Sea of Life  
The Land of Promise lies.

---

Sometimes that Sea is calm as this,  
When Faith illumines the heart with bliss.

‘ But sometimes storms and darkness rise,  
And angry billows roll—  
Dark doubts, like clouds that stain the skies,  
Distress and vex the soul ;  
And many, ere the Sea be cross’d,  
Wreck’d on the shoals and rocks are lost.’

My little child’s half-frighten’d form  
Crept closer unto me,  
Until I spoke of One who still’d  
The waves of Galilee ;  
Who to His trusting ones, dismay’d,  
Said, ‘ It is I, be not afraid !’

I spoke of the Omnipotent—  
And when of Him I told,  
Who in the hollow of His hands  
The winds and waves doth hold,  
A smile of love stole o’er her face,  
That gave the child an angel’s grace.

She said, ‘ O lead me—I would make  
The path of glory mine,  
That on me, as the pure in heart,  
The love of Heaven may shine ;  
And round me His strong Arm may be  
When I shall cross the troubled Sea.

## GERALDINE.

My spirit, o'er a sea of dreams,  
Beholds an isle afar,  
Illumined by a beauteous smile—  
Memory's morning star.

'Tis thine, child-angel, Geraldine,  
Thine that angelic smile,  
Which casts its halo o'er the rocks  
Of barren Thistle Isle;—

Of Thistle Isle, which, from the sea,  
A gloomy bastion seem'd  
Of some old sea-king's castle,  
Round which the breakers gleam'd;—

Gleam'd as if they, with gnashing teeth,  
Unwilling homage paid,  
Breaking in vengeance round the rocks  
Because their course was stay'd.

But as, in strange chaotic dream  
Of ruins dark and wild,  
Sometimes will rise a phantom form  
Of glorious angel-child;

So mist in the desolate isle of rocks  
In that tempestuous sea,  
Amongst the native rough bold race,  
Seem'd Geraldine to be.

But brave were the hard-featured men,  
The island's sturdy race ;  
The winds seem'd to have cut the lines  
Upon each sharpen'd face ;

Lines which, as those on Prophet scroll,  
Life stories plainly told—  
Of many a wild, adventurous deed  
Of fisher brave and bold ;—

How many long December nights,  
Amidst the ice and snow,  
They'd watch'd the northern lights gleam bright,  
And heard the north winds blow.

For there, instead of counting life  
As in this land of ours—  
How many times for us have bloom'd  
The happy Summer flow'rs—

They only told how many times  
Had Winter o'er them past ;  
How many times on Christmas Eve  
They'd heard the howling blast.



For Summer brought them flowers so few,  
They only knew her near  
When earth and heaven in sky and sea  
Seem'd one, so calm and clear.

But though for buds of southern clime  
The island was too bleak,  
Such roses never bloom'd as they  
On Geraldine's fair cheek.

And wailing winter winds, which made  
The sea with passion foam,  
And blinding sleet, and hail, and rain,  
That revell'd round her home,

All strove in vain to steal away,  
Impetuous and wild,  
The flower that Beauty here had made  
Her own adopted child.

The weather-beaten fishermen  
Loved well this blossom rare,  
And watch'd her, with a secret pride,  
Grow year by year more fair.

And yet they wonder'd not—but strange  
Mysterious tales would tell  
Of Geraldine, the Island Rose,  
Loved by them all so well.

---

One said that 'from the horizon far,  
Where earth and heaven seem one,  
A ship with mystic sails was seen  
Beneath the rising sun.

'Its sails were white as glistening snow;  
And as the ship drew near,  
He saw an angel at the helm  
The glorious vessel steer.

'And while he watch'd, there came a sound.  
With low and plaintive swells;  
It came from up the sunlit sea,  
As sweet as marriage-bells.

'And then the angel crew were seen  
To land upon the isle,  
And music of the mystic bells  
Was pealing all the while.

'They came straight to the Fisher's cot,  
The very summer morn  
The mother of the fair rose died,  
And Geraldine was born.

'And so, because the angels came  
Without God's own decree,  
They only took the mother's *form*  
Away across the sea ;

'And that her angel spirit, left,  
Unto her child was given,  
To dwell on earth till God's own time  
To call her home to heaven.'

Another said, 'The angels came  
To take both wife and child ;  
But when they found the Thistle Isle  
So desolate and wild,

'They fled affrighted from the shore,  
And in their terror left  
A child of heaven, who comforted  
The Fisher's heart, bereft.'

Whiche'er be true I cannot tell ;  
So blessèd was her smile,  
Offspring of Heaven she may have been,  
This Rose of Thistle Isle.

For, oh ! her aged father's eye  
Beam'd with sublimest love ;  
He felt she was the gift of God,  
All other gifts above.

And he watch'd well, with jealous care,  
This young and only child :  
He knew that love was swift and strong,  
And youth and passion wild.

---

For many a bold young fisherman  
Had gazed upon this flower,  
And felt his heart stirr'd suddenly  
By a mysterious power.

For, God be thank'd ! there is no land,  
Beneath His eye above,  
So desolate that it can be  
A stranger unto love.

And so the island's daring youth  
Would spread the wee white sail,  
And o'er the breakers roam alone  
Before the fitful gale ;

And o'er their hearts, as sails at sea  
Uprise when fair winds blow,  
Came happy dreams of gleaming arms  
And bosom white as snow,

Beneath which beat a heart as pure  
As out of Heaven could be,  
In which as countless graces grew  
As pearls beneath the sea.

From many a bold young sailor's heart,  
Amidst the seething foam,  
Went up the prayer to God for strength  
To win for her a home.

And when, amidst wild wintry gales,  
Death dower'd the angry wave,  
Sweeping the wreck-lost mariners  
Into a watery grave,

These brave men, conscious that she loved  
The soul with courage true,  
For her sake there was no brave deed  
They would not dare and do.

Thus many a life of precious worth,  
Cast on the rocky isle,  
Its rescue owed to bravery bought  
By Geraldine's sweet smile.

And many a mariner, who saw  
This maiden on the beach,  
And heard her soul-inspiring voice  
Help for the lost beseech,

Has said, when rescued from the surge,  
Amidst the raging storm,  
He thought the beauteous Geraldine  
His guardian angel's form.

And there was one storm-beaten man  
Who oft the tale did tell,  
How once within that cot he kiss'd  
Her shadow as it fell.

For when, to consciousness return'd,  
He saw this maiden fair,  
Watching with holiest charity  
And bow'd in silent prayer,—

He thought that he the grave had pass'd,  
And in some holy place  
Beheld the dawning light of heaven  
Round that angelic face.

So glorious shone her countenance,  
To which such calm was given,  
He thought that he had pass'd the gulf  
Dividing Earth from Heaven.

No wonder, then, so beautiful,  
She soon was known to fame—  
That many a stranger loved to hear  
The music of her name.

But one had look'd upon her face,  
A man with lion-heart ;  
And they who saw his passion-glance,  
Beheld him strangely start.

And he, whose spirit was not known  
In wildest storm to quail,  
Was changed as by magician's spell—  
His face grew deadly pale.

And from his eye a strange light gleam'd ;  
For when her voice he heard,  
Sweet echoes of a happy past  
His inmost being stir'd.

As oft beyond some sombre cloud  
We see the stainless blue,  
Beyond the guilt of years he look'd  
On Childhood pure and true.

And as the murmur of a stream,  
Or whisper of the wind,  
Will wake dear, half-forgotten things  
That slumber in the mind ;

So did her accents low and sweet,  
Remind him of the days  
When he had heard a mother's voice  
Speak words of prayer and praise.

And, while she spoke, a silent tear  
A moment dew'd his cheek—  
He gazed on her with rapturous awe,  
Before he dared to speak.

Dear ones, who long ago sweet flowers  
Upon life's way had cast,  
Seem'd, as he look'd, to stir with life  
The canvas of the Past.

'O God!' thought he, 'could I but call  
So sweet an angel mine,  
Treasures that lured my heart from Heaven  
Would I with joy resign.

'Could I but live one happy year  
As I have lived before,  
A ruin'd paradise of love  
Her virtues would restore.'

Conscience, the soul's dread monitor,  
Seem'd then to mock his fate,  
Waking a fiendish voice within,  
That cried, 'Too late—too late!'

For when he drew near Geraldine,  
The Rose of Thistle Isle  
The radiance of her beauty lost,  
And the love-light of her smile,

She knew that strong and daring man,  
A pirate captain bold,  
Of whom, by many a winter's fire,  
She'd heard dread stories told.

She shrank instinctive from his touch,  
As some poor trembling dove  
With whom a vulture sought to make  
His nest the home of love.



He saw, with bitterness of heart,  
Her terror and affright;  
He saw the bridgeless gulf that yawns  
Between the Wrong and Right.

But then, within his guilty soul,  
The phantom-fiend of Sin  
Silenced the guardian angel's voice  
That pleads for truth within.

'What! am I not,' he proudly thought,  
'The dread of land and sea?  
What power shall stay my hand? O child!  
My bride, or Death's, thou'lt be.'

And then he smiled on Geraldine,  
And, kneeling, softly sigh'd,  
'Oh! thou could'st make my life a heaven—  
Sweet maiden, be my bride!'

A look of speechless agony  
Betray'd her bitter woe:  
'Your bride! oh, that can never be!  
Your bride! ah no! ah no!'

The pirate captain turn'd away,  
Nor ought to this replied,  
But mutter'd half inaudibly,  
'She shall yet be my bride!'

Then, as if all were well forgiven,  
He pass'd the Fisher's door,  
And turn'd with hasty step to reach  
The boat upon the shore.

That night, a league from Thistle Isle  
Was moor'd the pirate ship :  
The captain fiercely strode the deck,  
Gnawing his nether lip.

The wind was whistling through the shrouds,  
Seeming to mock his words,  
And tauntingly above the mast  
Scream'd the wild ocean birds ;

When, with a loud imperious voice,  
He cried, ' Again the tide  
Shall not return ere I come back  
With Geraldine my bride !'

A shout, as if from hell, arose,  
Of wild, demoniac glee,  
From that blood-stain'd accursed crew,  
On that dark troubled sea.

That night, the Pirate flag was furl'd ;  
But o'er the darken'd tide  
Towards the rocks of Thistle Isle  
A boat was seen to glide.

The night was stormy, and dark and cold ;  
The wind, with muffled tone,  
Sang to the waves a dirge-like strain  
To music of its own,

The Pirate steer'd the boat to shore,  
And then the hateful crew,  
Landing upon the Thistle rocks,  
Their glittering poniards drew ;

And up the winding path they crept,  
Where 'mong the rocks uprose  
The Fisher's little lonely cot,  
Where slept the Island Rose,

If ever angels hover'd round  
A sleeping sister's face,  
This surely was a blessed spot,  
A hallow'd, holy place !

All was a moment still ; then, lo !  
A startled cry arose,  
An echoed cry that broke the still  
Of that dread night's repose.

For from his couch of pain had risen  
The maiden's aged sire ;  
'Geraldine,' cried he, 'Geraldine !'  
'See, see, the cot's on fire !'

The suffering man had long been bow'd,  
By age, and care, and pain ;  
Helpless, he knew to strive to save  
Himself or child were vain.

Like frightened fawn, in sudden haste  
Fair Geraldine awoke :  
She saw above a line of fire,  
And round, the wreathing smoke !

'Oh ! father !' said the trembling maid,  
'I cannot leave you here :  
What shall I do ? my God, I know  
That only Thou art near !'

'Fly !' said the old man, 'and perchance  
Some friendly hand is nigh :  
If not, oh ! take my blessing, child,  
And leave me here to die.'

Scarce from his lips this utterance fell,  
When swoon'd she with affright ;  
For, lo ! the Pirate's stalwart form  
Fell on her startled sight.

He clasp'd his arms around the maid ;  
She struggled to be free ;  
But he exultingly exclaim'd,  
'My Bride, not Death's, thou'lt be !'

And then a fiendish cry uprose,  
As from the cot he pass'd,  
Whilst round the roof the lurid flames  
Were flickering in the blast.

But as he bore the maiden off,  
A cry rose deep and wild :  
'God, God, have pity ! save ! protect !  
Give, give me back my child !'

But all unheeded went the cry  
Forth on the rising storm—  
The Chieftain but more tightly clasp'd  
The fainting maiden's form.

Safe to the dreaded ship, at length,  
The boat was seen to glide ;  
And from the deck arose the cry,  
'Welcome the Sea-king's bride !'

Then, as if God no more could brook  
The devilry of man,  
He seem'd to give the maiden frail  
A wondrous talisman.

For with the dawn of consciousness ;  
Strong in her trust of Heaven,  
She felt that even in that hour  
God had deliverance given.

---

Upon that blood-stain'd deck, I ween,  
It was a solemn sight,  
To see that beauteous maiden stand  
Like angel clothed in white.

As calm as martyr midst the flames  
Fair Geraldine stood now ;  
The smile of pity on her face  
Illumed her pallid brow.

The Pirate Captain durst not move,  
But stood aside dismay'd ;  
While Geraldine, with searching eye,  
The seething deep survey'd.

She waved her hand—none dared to speak ;  
All gazed with bated breath ;  
While aloud she cried, with thrilling voice,  
' I am the Bride of Death ! '

A moment more—a sullen plunge  
Was heard ; and in the deep,  
In the cold embrace of the angel Death,  
Geraldine fell asleep.

A flash, as from the angry eye  
Of God, illumed the sea,  
And by the light the Pirate's face  
Was terrible to see.

' Help ! Help ! an argosy untold  
Be his, who now shall save  
The Rose of Thistle Isle this night  
From the dark ocean wave ! '

' A rope—a rope cast out, cast out !  
She yet again will rise.'  
But here another angry glance  
Of God illumed the skies.

As if the spirits of the dead  
For vengeance had arisen,  
Claiming the retributive Hand  
Of the avenging One in heaven,—

The billows whiten'd east and west ;  
So white the foam was spread,  
It seem'd the resurrection robes  
Of Ocean's mighty dead.

The countless dead, that year by year  
Had slumber'd in their graves,  
With watery mounds above them heap'd  
In ever-rolling waves,—

They seem'd to wake for vengeance now ;  
The storm-wind louder wail'd ;  
A fearful spell was on the ship ;  
The stoutest spirit quail'd.

The lightning stream'd like molten stars  
From murky thunder-clouds,  
And 'midst the cries and groans of men  
Rattled the rifted shrouds.

The splinter'd mast fell with a crash,  
Striking the helmsman dead ;  
And, rudderless, the haunted ship  
Through foaming billows sped.

Thus drifted on the fated ship,  
Drifted a little while,  
Till a sweeping billow crush'd her hull  
On the rocks of Thistle Isle.

Then imprecations, yells, and groans,  
That echoed up the sky,  
Were only answer'd by a glance  
From God's avenging eye.

And, by that light, upon the surge  
Was seen the scatter'd wreck,  
And they that clung to the broken spars  
And the planks of the riven deck.

Alone one swimmer's form was seen  
To rise above the wave,  
That gulf'd the rest of the pirate crew  
In an unhallow'd grave.



It was the Captain—only he  
Had reach'd the fatal shore,  
'Midst the roll of thunder overhead  
And the mighty tempest's roar.

It was a fearful place, I ween :  
Behind him rose the rocks,  
Whose rugged sides through Time had borne  
Thousands of billow-shocks.

To them he turn'd with eager eyes,  
And desperate, frenzied clutch ;  
But the shell-clad surface of the rocks  
Crumbled beneath his touch.

So steep they rose, all efforts vain ;  
He sank upon the sand,  
Whilst wave on wave still nearer drew,  
As the tide set to the strand.

Beyond, roll'd on the mighty sea ;  
He felt the chill salt spray,  
Whilst in the horizon rose the pale  
First pitiless gleams of day.

He knew 'twere vain to strive to swim  
He felt wave after wave  
Closing around him, and he knew  
No hand could help or save.

Prometheus never felt such woe,  
The vultures at his breast,  
As did this sin-cursed Pirate chief,  
In Death's stern hour unblest.

In half-delirious dream, he saw  
The dark deeds of the Past—  
The wither'd flowers of early years,  
He from his heart had cast.

Memory, with unrelenting hand,  
Unveil'd past joyous years ;  
Recall'd a mother's broken heart,  
And a dying sister's tears.

He saw the first grim dawn of crime ;  
And then, in ghastly train,  
Hundreds of phantom victims rose,  
To mock his spirit-pain.

And, 'midst the roar of wind and wave,  
He heard that cry so wild—  
'God, God, have pity ! save ! protect !  
Give, give me back my child !'

And last, before his fading sight,  
He saw the white robes gleam  
Of Geraldine, whose form now shone  
Like angel's in a dream.

She seem'd to be transfigured now,  
Sitting at Heaven's gate,  
With the flaming sword of the cherubim,  
Murmuring, 'Too late ! too late !'

With this last vision, Death drew nigh,  
His anguish'd eyes to close,  
And the last cold wave, his winding-sheet,  
Around his form arose.

\* \* \* \* \*

At dawn of day, the fishers found,  
'Midst relics of the storm,  
The Pirate's grim and ghastly corpse  
And the hapless maiden's form.

But lo ! his countenance in death  
Inspir'd such thoughts of dread,  
The Fishers said, a hallow'd grave  
They fear'd to give the dead.

So from the beach they raised his corse,  
And back 'midst the howling storm,  
From the highest rock of Thistle Isle,  
Was hurl'd the Pirate's form.

No stone could mark the water-mound ;  
But seamen still declare,  
The passage 'twixt the rocks was cursed  
When he was buried there ;

And that at midnight they can hear  
Despairing shriek and groan,  
As if, chain'd to some hidden rock,  
The dead could still make moan.

And when elsewhere the sea is calm,  
The current's wild white wave,  
In foaming sheets of water, shows  
The Pirate's haunted grave.

But on the beauteous Geraldine  
Were reverent fingers laid,  
And a grave in the churchyard's greenest spot  
Was given the lovely maid.

From which, though long, long years have pass'd,  
A charmed flow'ret springs,  
White as the fairest violet  
Shaken from vernal wings.

And to this day the mariners  
Come to this place of rest,  
And once a-year pluck leaves and flowers,  
To wear them on their breast.

For still they say—if, tempest-toss'd,  
To Danger-Rock they're driven,  
The wondrous flow'ret charms and saves,  
As by the arm of Heaven.

O perfect Flower of Virtue, still  
Such simple faith sustain ;  
For they who wear thee near their heart  
May fearless cross the main.

Terrors that haunt the grave of vice  
Shall vanish before thee ;  
For thou canst make the storm-vex'd soul  
Calm as a waveless sea.



### THE SEA-FLOWER.

BEAUTIFUL Sea-Flower ! \* lonely and forsaken,  
How camest thou upon this dreary beach  
To find a death-bed, all things from thee taken  
Thou yearnest in the far-off waves to reach ?

Methought the Sea-Flower answer'd, ' Far away,  
In God's green gardens hidden 'neath the waves,  
Caress'd all day and night by the salt spray,  
My home was once in fairest ocean caves.

\* ' Call us not weeds—we are flowers of the sea.'

' For life I clung to the great rock, which stood  
Unmoved amongst the billows ; though the storm  
Raged with defiant threatenings rough and rude,  
Shelter'd, it kept my frailest sister's form.

' But in an evil hour I ceased to cling  
To that from which came joy, and hope, and rest :  
The treacherous waters, round me murmuring,  
Promised me life more beautiful, more blest.

' So I forsook my Home, the waves to follow ;  
The treacherous waters mock'd at once my fate,  
And, every promise broken—faithless, hollow—  
They cast me here, dying and desolate.'

As even thou, if in Temptation's hour  
The Rock of Ages thou shalt dare despise,  
Thou shalt discover false is worldly power—  
Safety alone in Truth and Virtue lies.

Cling to the Rock—the tempest lowers in vain,  
And sorrow's gulping waves may round thee roll ;  
Cling to the Rock, so shalt thou Faith sustain,  
And find eternal rest and peace of soul !



## SAND CASTLES.

Now sitting on the shingle,  
Hear what the children teach,  
Building their mimic castles  
Upon the sandy beach ;—

Donjon, turret, and bastion,  
And castellated keep,  
With battlements of pebbles,  
And a moat both broad and deep.

Busied in pleasant pastime,  
Never a thought give they  
To the tide, that soon will be flowing,  
And sweep their walls away.

Borne o'er the weedy ledges,  
Unheeded seems to be  
The voice of the distant waters,  
The deep-toned voice of the sea.

But now they have built their castle,  
Drawbridge and tower complete ;  
Glad to go home, they are turning  
Away with weary feet.

---

Glad to go home, they heed not  
The castle left behind—  
The work of their busy labours,  
The sport of the waves and wind.

O children ! your sand-built castle  
Waketh this thought in me :  
What are we all but children  
On the shores of Eternity ?

In Life's bright morn, we labour,  
When sounds of the solemn sea  
Die, like a distant echo  
Of a far futurity.

Frail as the work of children,  
Structures we deem sublime,  
By the solemn roll of ages  
Are swept from the sands of Time.

E'en with our best-loved castles  
Soon we shall weary grow ;  
And, ere our work is completed,  
Homewards we long to go.

Home, where no work can perish—  
Far from earth's shifting sands—  
To a 'building of God in heaven,  
A house not made with hands.'



## THE LIGHTHOUSE.

I LEARNT to love the Lighthouse,  
Which, far as sight could reach,  
Tower'd o'er the rocks of Portland,  
And treacherous Chesil beach.

I found it a companion  
On many a wintry night,  
When from our little harbour  
I watch'd the friendly light.

It seem'd, when lives around me  
Were fraught with changes ever,  
A glad thing to behold one light  
False or inconstant never.

To see one unchanged purpose,  
Though storms might wildly beat,  
And gulfing wreck-strewn waters  
Broke o'er its hoary feet.

'Twas pleasant to think the Lighthouse  
Could brave the wind and rain,  
Which on its storm-proof casements  
Beat wildly, but in vain.

---

For from the post of duty  
Its light shone true and sure;  
Neither the storm could frighten,  
Nor transient calms allure.

The Storm-King, shrieking round it,  
His mantle of cloud might spread,  
Or the radiant stars from heaven  
Pour blessings on its head ;—

Nothing could change its purpose :  
True as the sailor's star,  
The light of the friendly beacon  
Shone o'er the deep afar.

Its light seem'd brighter to twinkle,  
As if from passing ships  
It heard the benedictions  
Fall from the sailors' lips.

And it seem'd to tell me the secret  
That gave it power to win  
The trust of the anxious seamen—  
Its light shone from within.

It told me that on Life's ocean,  
If I would a beacon be  
To guide a shipwreck'd brother  
From dangers of the sea,—

From my soul 'midst calm or tempest,  
Brightest in danger's night,  
The light of God, from His lamp the heart,  
Must shine with certain light.

From the depths of my inmost being  
Light must be seen of all,  
If on my life, like the Lighthouse,  
I would have blessings fall.



#### DIFFERENT PATHS.

As I stood on the sea-shore, gushing  
Adown the beach east and west,  
I saw two streamlets rushing,  
As if eager for rest.  
Seeing the calm deep Ocean,  
The goal of their devotion,  
They sprang to his foam-white breast.

The same hill was their source ;  
Gaily they sprang from its side ;  
But, choosing a different course  
Oceanward to glide,  
Both water'd the thirsting earth,  
Blessing with life and mirth  
The valley and green hill-side.

Both of these streams, methought,  
    Could many a story tell  
Of rocks with danger fraught,  
    In many a haunted dell ;  
Or when, in the sunny light,  
Brimming with glad delight,  
    They kiss'd the flowers loved well.

And how, surmounting dangers  
    That in each course did start,  
They met, no longer strangers,  
    Mingling, never to part.  
Though different ways they flow'd,  
And different gifts bestow'd,  
    Both find the sea's great heart !

Brother, who, without charity,  
    Thinkest thy path alone  
To Heaven is right, and scornest me  
    For that I make my own,—  
Think of the streams in the sea :  
For even as they may we  
    Meet in the Great Unknown !



## THE SAILOR BOY.

It is delight to me to roam  
About the quaint old harbour bar,  
To scent the briny ocean foam  
And reeking Stockholm tar,—

To hear the creaking chains and ropes  
Of vessels moor'd beside the quay,  
And watch that type of many hopes—  
A freighted ship set out to sea.

Or, dearer still, to see run in  
The vessel that hath haven found  
After its voyage, and hear the din  
Of welcomes for the homeward bound.

But there's no sight about the sea  
That makes my spirit half so glad,  
Or fans the fire of pride in me  
As doth a brave, bold Sailor lad.

There's something in his sun-tann'd cheeks,  
His simple faith, his earnest eyes,  
That of the mighty Power speaks  
Who shapes his destinies.

His frank, firm look, his step so free,  
The brave contempt and innocent scorn  
Playing about his lip when he  
Speaks of the fear with landsmen born.

His winsome smiles of trusting grace  
Seem to proclaim, to such as these,  
Our country, fearless of disgrace,  
May trust her honour on the seas ;—

That still the strength of Britain's fleet  
Lies not in guns or proof steel-clads,  
But in the staunch true hearts that beat  
Among her Sailor lads.

And while the hills of Freedom breed  
Such race as this, what fear have we ?  
Sufficient for the hour of need  
Our God and they shall be.

The same invincible spirit sways  
Their being as, 'midst spoils of war,  
Gave Nelson, in his famous days,  
The bays of Trafalgar.

And whilst they man our floating forts,  
Before their strength the invading foe,  
Pale as the chalk cliffs round our ports,  
With Death's white dread shall grow.

## THE SEA-GULL.

ON the Summer breeze,  
O'er the azure seas,  
Or when the storm-breakers foam,  
The scream is heard  
Of this ocean bird,  
That loves the wild waves to roam.

In a path of light  
On the waters bright,  
'Neath stars that gem the sky,  
Its piercing note  
Is heard to float,  
Like an orphan's wailing cry.

And when the wave  
Awes the heart of the brave,  
As it rolls o'er the stricken mast,  
'Midst thrilling cries  
And prayers and sighs  
Is heard the bird in the blast.

Though winds may blow,  
And waters flow,  
Its heart knows not a fear ;  
For let the deep  
Its revels keep—  
It soars to a higher sphere.

And so may we,  
Like this bird of the sea,  
When our souls are tempest-driven,  
From waves of strife  
Of the sea of life  
Ascend to a stormless Heaven !



## EMMELINE GRAY.

EMMELINE GRAY, the young, the fair,  
Rose with a sigh from her vesper prayer ;—  
Loud was the voice of the mighty sea !  
Mournfully fell her secret tear ;  
She said, with the tremulous voice of fear,  
‘ Oh, will he never come back to me ?

‘ Must I for ever feel this pain ?  
Must I for ever hope in vain ?  
Stern was the voice of the wailing sea !  
Still must the raging tempest blow ?  
Still must my home be the home of woe ?  
Oh, will he never come back to me ?

‘ He said, ere the roses of Summer died  
He would come and make me his darling Bride ;—  
Wild was the voice of the stormy sea !



He said, "I will take my dove to a nest  
In a beautiful land of the far-off west :"  
Oh, will he never come back to me ?

'Angels of bliss, from the star-worlds, come !  
Why are the minist'ring Spirits dumb ?  
Why do I hear but the wailing sea ?  
The days of Summer are past away ;  
The flowers he gave me, all decay ;—  
Oh, will he never come back to me ?'

'Go !' said a still small voice that night,  
'Go, at the dawn of the morrow's light,  
Down to the shore of the surging sea !'  
The night-wind shriek'd round the maiden's bed ;  
The death-watch tick'd ; but the maiden said,  
'He will come, he will come again to me !'

She turn'd on her pillow, but could not sleep ;  
She heard the wail of the surging deep,  
The ceaseless dirge of the rolling sea !  
She rose ere the light of morn had risen,  
And she said, as she look'd in prayer to Heaven,  
'Thank God, he is coming again to me !'

The fishermen came with the dawning light ;  
They saw on the shore a fearful sight—  
A winding-sheet was the salt, white wave.  
The maiden at last was made a Bride ;  
She slept in peace at her lover's side—  
Their bridal bed was the cold, dark grave !

**THE TROUBLED DEEP.**

BENEATH the quivering lamps of love  
Hung high in the dome of night,  
The lonely moon in grandeur walk'd,  
Through starry groves of light.  
But though serenely beautiful  
The stars and the moon's soft beam,  
The waves of Ocean wildly leapt,  
As if in a troubled dream.  
In vain the crystalline splendours fell  
On Ocean's billowy breast :  
The holy light of the moon and the stars  
In vain would give it rest ;  
For it seem'd to hold a secret dread  
Conceal'd in its mighty breast.

I said to the Deep, ' To the wailing wind  
Tell all of thy woes to-night ;  
For why shouldst thou moan with a troubled heart,  
And a face so fair and bright ?'  
But a voice, methought, from the waves replied,  
' Oh ! listen, Earth's fleeting guest ;  
Thou knowest ten thousand hearts beside,  
Like mine, that are never at rest.

Go, solace the souls that are mourning now,  
And soothe with thy hand the sufferer's brow;  
And chide not the waves, that may not be still  
'Neath the light of the moonlit sky,  
When even thine heart is a troubled thing  
Beneath God's searching eye.'



### THE PENCILLED LINE.\*

A YEAR ago, when Summer's glorious sun  
Spangled the blue sea with its gems of light,  
And heart and life seem'd like the swelling tide  
Breaking with music round a happy shore—  
Ella, the angel of my love, by whom  
My heart has won and lost a Paradise,  
Traced, with a hand once fondly prest in mine,  
This pencill'd line beneath the Poet's thought—  
'Than not be noble, better not be at all.'

Oh, words of life in this drear world of death!  
They come like echoes of an angel's song,  
Like sounds of music from that far-off sea  
Which cover'd yesterday the desolate rocks,

\* Written after seeing a line pencilled in a copy of Mr. Tennyson's  
'Princess.'

Even as Love with fairy hopes conceal'd  
Sorrows of Change that slept within the heart.  
And though the self-same hand that traced this line  
Pluck'd from my being Life's best passion-flower,  
And bound a crown of thorns upon my brow,  
Yet would I kiss it for this legacy—  
This wealth of thought left in the priceless words,  
'Than not be noble, better not be at all.'

Since last we met, like writings on the sand  
How many hopes have vanish'd, pleasures flown—  
Feelings and thoughts our hearts can know no more :  
Yet 'midst the ruins of the heart I stand,  
And, seeing these words, I dream I hear thy voice,  
Dear as before thy spirit pass'd from me,  
And 'mongst the living I beheld thee dead—  
The angel flown that blest my life with love—  
The fountain frozen, whose celestial spray  
Gave life and fragrance to the heart's first flowers :  
So will I take them as thy parting words,  
Sacred as if the last from dying lips—  
Remembering 'midst the strife of men and things,  
The wreck of pleasure and the death of love,  
'Than not be noble, better not be at all.'



## RESTORE THE DEAD.

‘RESTORE the Dead!’ she sang. Ah! be it so,  
My soul responded, but as Heaven gives back  
The loved and lost, the vanish’d long ago—  
The happy smiles, once sunbeams in our track,  
With Heavenly glory round each sainted brow,  
And in their eyes .  
The light of Paradise.

‘Restore the Dead!’ Ah, yes! give back the Dove  
That with the flush of early promise died.  
Far every sordid sense of Earth above,  
From every stain of sorrow purified,  
Revived with dews of Heaven, give back that love  
Which evermore imparts  
Joy to our yearning hearts.

From smouldering ashes of the dead dark past,  
Phoenix-like, let a splendid love arise,  
Never to be extinguish’d, by the blast  
Of Time—a star of Paradise  
Set in the Heaven of a loyal soul,  
Whose sacred light shall shine  
Eternal and divine.



## FRAGMENT.

As to a mother's grave a child draws near,  
To pluck a few tear-wet forget-me-nots,  
So come I to my Birth-place, once so dear,  
And roam again the old familiar spots.  
But, oh ! though still the same blue hills arise,  
Whose feet are wash'd by the same sounding sea,—  
Though still bend o'er me the same sunny skies,—  
Though still the same, they seem not so to me.  
Where is the sunlight of the happy past ?  
Where are the loving hands once garlands wreathing ?  
And where, oh, where ! amidst Life's passion-blast,  
The dear fond voices once affection breathing ?  
Ah, Death ! I own thy omnipresent power ;  
I see thy footprints on the daisied grass ;  
And 'midst the ruins of the heart I pass,  
Stealing poor relics of a bygone hour.



## IN DREAMS.\*

MOTHER, I know we cannot meet  
As we have met before,—  
That now thy voice of welcome sweet  
Is hush'd for evermore ;  
And yet I know that thou art near,  
Still watching by my side,  
The dearest of Heaven's guardian band  
Whose spirits round me glide.  
But though I cannot see thy face,  
Nor yet thy loved voice hear,  
Come to me, Mother, in my dreams,—  
Come to me, Mother dear !

Often, whilst I have slept, I've seen  
Visions of angels bright,  
Who seem'd, in love, from realms above  
To bring my heart delight.  
Come ! come, then, in the hush of night,  
And let me feel thy kiss,  
And see thy smile, and hear thy voice,  
Whose tenderness was bliss.  
Be thou my guardian angel now,  
To bless me and to cheer ;—  
Come to me, Mother, in my dreams,—  
Come to me, Mother dear !

\* Written for music.

**IN THE MIST.**

DAY wakes from slumber, and his dewy eyes,  
Half-opened, gaze upon the prayer-bent flowers ;  
And Night departeth wearily, with sighs,  
To darken with her shadows distant bowers.  
The form of Day dilates with pride again ;  
The pale Moon, ghost-like, wanders in the sky,  
Forsaken by her once bright starry train ;  
And in the East the Sun, with mocking eye,  
Exults to see his rival's splendours die.

Day gathers strength : but, as if the strong Power  
Who did command, ' Let there be light ! ' on earth,  
Condemn'd the pride display'd upon that hour,  
He marr'd the glory of Time's latest birth ;  
For o'er the hills a phantom form uprose ;  
Its breath conceal'd the sea-rocks, at their feet,  
Sitting with cold composure, chill repose.  
It bound about the world a winding-sheet,  
And cover'd Nature's face, before so sweet.

The valleys and the mountains were immured  
In a strange tomb of vapour ; and the town,  
Deep in the ravine, was so obscured,  
That when I gazed from out the casement down,



I could not find the crumbling Norman tower  
Of the old church ; no vestige could I see :  
Gone the clock-face that mark'd for me the hour—  
Mountain and valley and the vanish'd sea,  
Might all have found a blank Eternity.

It was the Sabbath morn. I paused to list ;  
For welcome, well-known music had arisen.  
What though the church was hidden in the mist ?  
The chimes still drew my spirit nearer Heaven.  
Eye could not see from whence arose the peal ;  
But that it was a sacred place I knew—  
For God has made the human heart to feel,  
That those monitions often prove most true  
Which from our grosser sight are hid from view.

May-be, the mists of many sins obscure,  
And bind about our hearts their chilling shroud ;  
But who will dare to doubt that for the pure  
The land of glory lies beyond the cloud ?  
The mists of Doubt at last away must roll ;  
But ere the heavenly heights our spirits climb,  
Yea, we may hear that music of the soul,  
That falls, as sweetly as a Sabbath chime,  
From prophets and from priests of God sublime !



## CHILD-FANCIES.

WHENE’ER I saw the sunset, this thought my heart  
possest—

God to His palace Beautiful goes down the glowing  
west.

But if a cloud at eve-tide cast a shadow o’er the sea,  
I still recall the childish fear o’erspreading Memory :  
’Tis the frown of avenging Heaven, I thought, and  
now is closed the gate

Against some soul who sought the light and joy of  
truth, too late !

And to my mind each rising star that glitter’d from  
the skies

Became the lambent gleam of Hope from dear  
departed eyes.

But best I loved the Pleiades, and watch’d for them  
at night ;

For I thought them the souls of a family, whose  
love, in its first delight,

Was so pure, Death durst not separate the fond  
devoted Seven,

But let them journey together the space dividing  
Earth from Heaven.



## SONG.

ALL things are meeting and parting for ever ;—

Sing, oh ! for the out and the homeward-bound !

Gladness and Sorrow no touch can dissever ;

Music of life is a mingled sound.

Passionate echo in minor key closes,

Waking with hope saddest thoughts with the strain ;

Nightingale's songs of farewell to the roses

Give our hearts pleasure, whilst theirs break with  
pain.

Bleak are the sea-weeded ledges and shingle

Ebbing tides leave when they moan their farewells ;

But joy comes again when the welcome sounds  
mingle,

'When waves print their kiss on the rosy-lipp'd  
shells.

Let us not mar, then, delights of a meeting

With visions of parting that follows too soon ;

For Love, whate'er else may around us be fleeting,

Ah ! thou shalt be true as the tides to the moon.



## ISABEL.

Who rides, bare-backed, the panting steed,  
Far up the heights, with reckless speed?—  
The clattering hoofs resound again,  
And yet again beyond the hill :  
As if pursued, the rider still  
Press'd onwards, every nerve a-strain,  
Some foe to fly, or refuge gain.

Alas ! it was a maiden fair ;  
The phantom that pursued,—Despair !  
Isabel Vere the maiden's name ;  
And this her story, given to fame.

For seven long years had Isabel  
Loved with a love no tongue may tell.  
Her lover, Cola Ellandree,  
As brave a sailor of the sea  
As ever walk'd a quarter-deck,  
Or clasp'd a loving maiden's neck,  
Had kept his vows from falsehood free :  
So on this Summer morn 'twas said  
The happy lovers should be wed.

But ere it dawn'd the hand of Fate  
Had intervened, to separate  
Two hearts that loved with love as true

And pure as mortals ever knew.  
Bitter were words of grief, that fell  
That sorrowing hour from Isabel,  
When the betrothed, to meet no more,  
Parted upon that storm-beat shore.  
'Alas !' she sobb'd, ' my love, my own,  
I feel so poor a coward grown,  
That fears before to me unknown  
Crowd on my heart. I think how drear  
These shores with thee no longer near—  
When I shall hear the waters moan  
Their melancholy monotone  
Ever and ever of the gone ;  
When I, through long, dark wintry nights,  
Watch o'er the rocks the danger lights,  
To see the storm-cloud stain the skies,  
To feel the gloom of doubt arise :  
For such dread shadows cross my soul  
Whene'er the breaking billows roll,  
My life seems wreck'd, my heart grows faint,  
And Fancy doth such terrors paint,  
That even prayer, from anguish wrung,  
Falls hopeless from a faithless tongue.'

'Hush, my beloved one,' Cola said,  
Though he a tear of sorrow shed ;  
'Why dost thou weep with vain despair ?  
Trust thou the Father's loving care :  
Those sister-angels from above,  
That nightly watch about thy pillow,  
Will traverse e'en the heaving billow,

And bring sweet messages of love  
In many a happy dream to me,  
However dark the stormy sea.'

'Would that I were an Angel blest !  
Isabel lovingly replied ;  
'One of that glorious band, to glide  
Around thee in the hours of rest,  
That, though unseen, I still with thee  
Might make my home upon the sea,  
Might o'er thy couch in sickness bend,  
And there thy every want attend.  
Oh ! Death, believe me, has no sting,  
Anticipating such a thing ;  
For Heaven's best joy is surely this —  
If taken first to realms above,  
I may bring thence sweet dreams of bliss  
To those on earth I fondly love ;  
For such Devotion fills my soul,  
I know its spirit cannot die,  
And Death is powerless to control  
This spark of immortality.  
Although the light of human smile  
His icy touch may quench, erewhile  
Pure love is lifted to the sky,  
And, there re-kindled, from on high  
Throbs like a star eternally,  
Shedding bright rays on Life's dark river,  
And beckoning Earth's best-loved to come  
And find the joy, where parting never  
Dispels the dream of changeless Home.

For as the ivy to the tree  
I would my love should be to thee.  
Over the oak's uplifted form  
May pass the dark, destroying storm ;  
Disease may sap the springs of life,  
The canker and the worm be rife ;  
But ivy clothes with living green  
The boughs, whose beauties pass away ;  
Its tendrils love from sight to screen  
The crumbling ruin in decay :  
And even when the forest oak  
Is smitten by the lightning's stroke,  
The ivy's arms but closer cling,  
Devoted to the stricken thing,  
Braving with it the piercing blast :  
So true remaineth to the last,  
That when the woodman dooms to die  
The tree that lifts its head on high,  
Then is its love most manifest ;  
It bares before the steel its breast,  
Which must be pierced, or torn in twain,  
Ere its companion feels a pain ;  
Nor doth the axe their love-lives sever ;  
Both die, as they have lived — together.'

Such were the thoughts, with sad adieu,  
That mark'd this sorrowing interview,  
That blended with the sob, and prayer  
That strove to nullify despair.  
Not even prayer could hope bestow,  
Or then assuage the lovers' woe :

The tears that with the darkness fell,  
Betray'd the grief of that farewell ;  
For he scarce loves who, in such sorrow,  
Could heed Hope's prattle of to-morrow.

Poor Isabel watch'd from the shore  
To see her lover's boat depart,  
And each stroke of the dripping oar  
Struck terror to her aching heart.  
Then came of loneliness the sense,  
Of isolation, sharp, intense,  
Swaying her being ; for the pain  
Had seized, like fever, on the brain.

With sleepless eye, through the lone night  
She watch'd, until at morning light  
Chancing a passing sail to see,  
She cried, with anguish, ' It is he !  
He beckons still, that I may know  
He shares alike my love and woe !'  
Even as an orphan child afar  
Looks up, to single out one star,  
And dreams, with innocent delight,  
The brightest orb that meets his sight  
Must be his heart's star, Death has given  
Unto the shining hosts of Heaven.

But when through mist the pallid dawn  
Gleam'd from the east, the cry of 'Gone !'  
Rang startling through the morning air,  
And told the maiden's deep despair.



Alas ! 'twas not despair alone,  
For Reason had been overthrown ;  
Too cruel that long night of pain  
For the frail fabric of the brain.  
A change pass'd o'er her eyes of blue,  
Which now had lost their heavenly hue,  
And in them gleam'd the fatal light,  
That ignis fatuus of sight  
That haunts the fen of mental night.

No more coherently she spoke ;  
The brain had perish'd by the stroke ;  
And, as if they could hear, once more  
She cried, to ocean-wave and shore,  
And to the mournful wailing sea,  
'Give, oh ! give back my Love to me !'  
Alas ! the wild cry from the beach  
No ear of sympathy could reach ;  
But in the horizon rose a cloud,  
To which, with outstretch'd arm, aloud  
She call'd, with laughter, 'It is he !  
Across the waves he beckons me ;  
And I will come, my own, to thee.'

Then, with quick footsteps, from the beach  
Hastening her father's gate to reach,  
With cautious tread and light foot-fall  
She pass'd into the silent hall,  
So lightly, that, in slumber deep,  
Nor sire nor menial woke from sleep.

When forth she came, another morn,  
Baptized with falling dew, was born;  
All nature seem'd pure joy to share;  
Though round the walls—the silence there  
Grew still, oppressive—breath of air  
Flutter'd no leaf, nor stirr'd a flower.  
It was the dim religious hour,  
Time's interregnum, when we say,  
Night reigns not, neither doth the Day.

As if to do some secret deed,  
With her own hands she loosed the steed;  
And, springing from the grassy lawn,  
Both horse and rider pass'd, that dawn,  
Forth to the hills—no human sight,  
Discover'd till too late her flight.  
A moment only, Isabel  
Look'd back upon a home loved well—  
The scene of childhood's joyous hours,  
Garlanded with the myrtle-flowers  
Of Love's first dream; but Memory then  
Had lost dominion o'er the brain.  
Gone was the retrospective ken,  
That oftentimes fills a vacant place  
With saintly form or vanish'd face,  
Recalling tender thoughts that make  
The spot so dear for some sweet sake—  
Flowers cherish'd most by loving heart  
When destin'd with their light to part.  
Alas! no vision now return'd  
To make her pause upon her way;

By sigh nor tear was proof discern'd  
That Reason had regain'd her sway !

For, gazing once more on the sky,  
She seem'd to strain each eager eye,  
Until she saw again that cloud ;  
To which, with frenzied voice, aloud  
She cried, ' I see him beckon me ;  
It is his sail upon the sea ;  
And, Cola, I *will* come to thee !'  
Then, smoothing first the glossy mane,  
She gently loosed the curbing rein,  
And, with a gesture of command,  
Waved wildly her uplifted hand ;  
Then cried again, ' My steed, away !  
To Cliff-down Tor we go to-day !'

The noble horse instinctively  
Seem'd conscious where the maid would be,  
And answer'd with impatient start  
The strong emotion of her heart.  
Away he dash'd with reckless speed,  
As conscious that some daring deed  
Should ere the setting of the sun  
At Cliff-down Tor that day be done.

Now glorious gleams the sun on high,  
Upon his azure shield the sky ;  
He parts from hill and vale the mist ;  
The moment his warm beams have kiss'd

The distant waves, they rise and glow,  
Like countless boats with gilded prow.  
His beams have wooed the eglantine  
Her fairest buds that day to twine ;  
And with glad song, far out of sight,  
Higher and higher to the light,  
Till all the leafy woods are stirr'd,  
Springs up from Earth the exulting bird,  
The lark, whose joy it seems to rise  
So near the gates of Paradise,  
That the pure rapture of its songs  
To angels as to men belongs.

To cool the burning glance of Day,  
A zephyr passes, light and gay ;  
The bee is on his busy rounds,  
And earth is full of pleasant sounds.

But there, alas ! were flowers the sun  
In vain pour'd now his rays upon ;  
The roses once of fairest blush  
Now deepen'd to a hectic flush ;  
And though the zephyr kiss'd the bough,  
It could not cool the fever'd brow  
Of Isabel ; nor bird nor bee,  
Nor voices from the distant sea,  
With happy sounds could lull to rest  
The raging tumult in her breast.

At length, above the rocky shore,  
She curb'd the rein on Cliff-down Tor ;

From thence, with searching glance, the maid  
The ocean's broad expanse survey'd.  
It was a perilous, giddy height,  
That well her panting steed might fright:  
Drops, as of blood, fell from his mane,  
Fresh starting from each swollen vein ;  
His eyes dilated with wild fear,  
Press'd to the mountain-brink so near,  
As if upon his senses fell  
Forebodings which no tongue may tell.

At Cliff-down Tor a deep abyss  
Lies far beneath the precipice —  
Cliff-chasms, which Jove with mighty thunder  
Might in his wrath have rent asunder.  
But no ; these ruins of nature owed  
Existence to a simpler force.  
The water-springs, that silent flow'd,  
Unnoticed and unknown, their course  
In the earth's heart, by night and day,  
Silently fretted rocks away,  
Until they sapp'd the hills' foundation,  
And gave this chaos its creation.  
Soundless as night and morning meet,  
Or still as Death with viewless feet  
At midnight walks some darken'd street,  
Or as the frost with icy hand  
Spreads desolation o'er the land —  
Silent as star-beams nightly burn,  
Or planets on their axes turn,  
Or from the tiny acorn-cup

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The forest sapling springeth up—  
So all unseen beneath these hills  
Gather'd the trickling water-rills,  
Doing their secret work, to teach,  
More eloquent than human speech,  
What wonders are in silence wrought—  
How patient toil and quiet thought  
Will give, as they have given, birth  
To grandest monuments of earth.  
The massive gates of Circumstance  
Open by no capricious chance ;  
Their simple hinge, by Nature turn'd,  
Moves by a lever undiscern'd—  
Some law, or Heaven-consider'd plan,  
Mysterious to the thoughts of man.

By many a Christmas-fire the tale  
Of earth's convulsion still is told,  
When, 'midst the howling midnight gale,  
The land down to the ocean roll'd,  
As if grown weary evermore  
Of watching from the self-same shore.  
How once, whilst bright the faggot burn'd,  
And wassail flow'd on Christmas night,  
The hapless peasant homeward turn'd  
Who first stood shuddering on the height  
(The cliff where horse and rider stood),  
And there the devastation view'd.  
Fearful the sight to him, for here  
Had once been all he held most dear—  
His cottage home ;—but vanish'd now,

Torn as a bird's-nest from the bough.  
In vain he search'd with blank despair  
The home that stood no longer there :  
Nearer and nearer roll'd the sea—  
Nearer he heard the waters roar,  
And in his terror he could see  
The gleaming breakers on a shore  
No mortal eye had seen before.  
Was it a dream that thus beguiled ?  
Ah, no !—for where were wife and child,  
And home ? which in the peasant's sight  
Embodied all of earth's delight.

He strain'd his eager eyes ; again  
He sought the well-known spot, in vain ;  
And then bemoan'd the fate of those  
Whom he had left in sweet repose.  
Alas ! he thought, no hand could save  
His darlings from the darken'd grave ;  
That wife and child were buried deep  
Down in the earth's disorder'd heap.  
He reck'd not that the Father's care  
Protects the innocent and fair ;  
That oft, when wildest winds sweep by,  
And clouds of darkness stain the sky,  
Children, in slumber soft and sweet,  
Dream but of flowers about their feet —  
When loudest roars the vengeful sea,  
Steep'd in forgetfulness may be,  
Their happy dreams with visions full  
Of angels, pure and beautiful ;

That oft, when terror most appals  
The guilty in the thunder-storm,  
Upon the sleeping infant's form  
The shadow of the Saviour falls.  
Yet is the story oft-times told,  
When to the sea the cleft rocks roll'd,  
His cottage home away was swept  
So silently, his children slept,  
Nor woke within its walls till they  
Beheld at morn the break of day—  
Unconscious of the wild commotion  
That swept with fury earth and ocean.

Oh ! that the same protecting Power  
Had shielded Isabel that hour !  
But, no ; her eyes with wilder light  
Flash'd as she gazed adown the height.  
There Time had wrought his silent spells  
Upon the rocks and grassy dells—  
No longer desolate and bare,  
As when the Peasant, in despair,  
First gazed upon the ruins there.  
Nature, who loves the smiling face,  
And would not have one barren place  
Devoid of beauty or of grace,  
Had given the riven rocks a dress  
Of flowers, and clad their nakedness  
With garb of green gay loveliness.

It seem'd a world in miniature—  
Green valleys, wild acclivities,



Broad emerald lawns, and waving trees ;  
And o'er the beetling cliff, the pure  
Bright bugloss shone with heavenly hue,  
Or as the summer sea so blue.  
There is a pretty butterfly  
(Which taken from these haunts would die)  
The beauty of whose azure wings  
Seems caught from its fair blossomings.  
Deep in ravines, secluded well,  
Lies many a moss-grown peaceful dell ;  
The ash-tree's finely pencill'd boughs  
Strive to conceal the chalk-white brows  
Of many a rugged slope ; and flowers,  
From bird-sown seeds, spring into bowers  
Of life and beauty ; the wild-brier rose,  
With the clematis, fondly throws  
Its perfumed buds, and lush wood-bine  
Doth in fantastic garlands twine—  
To tell us from the poorest soil  
Nature, without a sense of toil,  
Can even upon the bones of death  
Give life to bloom of fragrant breath.  
And, as not satisfied with these,  
On cliff and rocky crevices  
The greenest moss and lichens fair  
Spread curious forms of beauty rare ;  
Whilst through the trees, where'er ye turn,  
Wave wastes knee-deep of bracken fern.  
Unpruned by man's officious hand,  
Here all is well by Nature plann'd,  
And birds pour richest melodies

From summer's leafy palaces,  
As if delirious with the bliss  
Of dwelling in a world like this.

Here oftentimes had Isabel  
Roam'd these green spots, remember'd well ;  
And many a shady nook was known  
To Cola and to her alone,  
Where they would sit, in days of yore,  
To read some tale of fairy lore ;  
Or haply through the groves would stray,  
And dream the sunny hours away.  
Alas ! that no fond memory now  
Could chase the shadows from her brow ;  
That now the light of laughing flowers  
Recall'd no dream of vanish'd hours ;  
That those unclouded skies above  
Calm'd not the sorrow of her love ;  
Nor could the beautiful inspire  
Of life a lingering desire ;  
Nor could the wild bird's gushing strain  
Lull in the heart the sense of pain.  
As wild a ruin was her mind  
As was the scene on that dread night,  
When the poor peasant search'd to find  
His home, his joy, his heart's delight.  
But when at length her strain'd sight fell  
Upon a distant grassy dell,  
Where, with the joy of early bliss,  
Her lips received Love's first warm kiss,  
This recollection served to throw

Fresh fuel on the fire of woe,  
And maddening thoughts of grief sprang then,  
Like vipers from a ferny glen.  
One moment only seem'd to start  
A thought of gladness to her heart.

Beyond these rocks, with sunlit crest,  
The broad sea sparkled east and west ;  
Beneath the glorious morning ray,  
The calm blue waters of the Bay  
Slept, like a child that, weary of play,  
Hath sobb'd himself to sleep, yet seems  
To murmur music in his dreams.  
Now in the horizon rose a skiff ;  
Its sail was set towards the cliff ;  
It seem'd a tiny toy to be  
Compared with the vast spreading ocean,  
The great, the boundless, and the free ;  
Yet how a loving heart's devotion  
Doth meanest objects magnify !  
As in the world man's busy mind,  
Forgetting earth's immensity,  
To every other passion blind,  
Will cling with joy tenaciously  
To one dear form, one cherish'd thing,  
Source from whence every hope must spring ;  
Or as the sailor to the skies  
Will raise with faith his earnest eyes,  
And 'midst the myriad stars of night  
Will single out one orb of light,  
The true, the changeless Polar Star,

To guide him to the harbour-bar ;  
So, when the gaze of Isabel  
Again upon the white sail fell,  
With a wild shriek, she cried, ' 'Tis he !  
I go ! I go ! he beckons me !'  
Then, with loud laugh of frenzied glee,  
All heedless of the depth below,  
Again she cried aloud, ' I go !'

Sudden, as if aroused from sleep,  
The goaded steed sprang o'er the steep :  
A sharp but momentary cry,  
As of delirious victory,  
Awoke the echoes of the hill ;  
Then all the undercliff was still.  
That last wild cry that then was heard,  
Startling from nest the timid bird,  
Was the last sound on earth that fell  
From the blanch'd lips of Isabel ;  
And where she first breathed love's sweet breath,  
There felt she the frost-kiss of Death.

\* \* \* \* \*

'The summer green to crimson burn'd  
Ere Cola to that shore return'd.—  
Sweet to the heart is that dear hour  
That dawns on long-expected meeting,  
When Love reveals his strongest power,  
And every pulse with hope is beating.  
We wonder what has taken place  
Since last we felt a loved embrace ;

Or if the one dear, tender voice  
Is changed, which made the soul rejoice;  
And crowds of happy thoughts arise,  
Of friends, of home, of loving eyes:  
So bright are Life's anticipations,  
When Hope piles up her gay creations,  
Before our castles built of air  
Lie, in the ruins of Despair.  
Such the emotions unexpress'd  
Within the hapless lover's breast,  
Who vainly question'd why no more  
He heard a welcome from the shore,  
And why, instead of signal dear,  
He saw the forms of strangers near.  
The grief the stricken bird betrays  
When it returneth to its nest,  
Where all it loved was wont to rest,  
Singing a sweet refrain of praise,  
But finds some ruthless hand hath torn  
All that it loved from life's dear tree,  
And, broken-hearted and forlorn,  
Still searches 'midst the vacancy;  
The woe of mother, when at morn  
She seeks with rapture her first-born,  
And, bending low to feel the bliss,  
From the warm lips, of matin kiss,  
Discovers in the night's still hour  
Angels have pluck'd her baby-flower—  
Have come from holy lands above,  
And with her darling fallen in love,  
Wafting her flower of life away,

To bud and bloom in brighter day;—  
Such sorrow thrill'd the breaking heart  
Of Cola, causing tears to start  
Even from the stranger's eyes, who there  
Reveal'd the fate of Love's despair.

Close by the samphire rocks the grave  
Of Isabel was made ; the wave  
At spring-tide almost laves the spot,  
Sacred to the forget-me-not  
Of many mourners, who there shed  
All that man's love may give the dead.  
And never fairer place of rest  
Was seen on Earth's grief-burden'd breast  
For those who pass beyond our reach,  
Far-drifted from Time's shifting beach ;  
Who, having braved Life's last dread storm,  
See but in death an angel's form.  
Here wind and wave their dirge intone  
For hope, for peace, for pleasure gone.  
The sea-bird oft will leave its nest  
To hover o'er that place of rest,  
Whose snowy pinions in the sun  
Give joy to many a mourning one,  
So like white wings of angels spread  
Above the ashes of the Dead.

The flowers were wet, though not with rain,  
But with the grief-tears wept in vain  
Over the grave of Isabel

By him whose sorrow none may tell.  
Yet ere he turn'd, with heart oppress'd,  
From that still, hallow'd place of rest,  
He heavenward gazed, as if to trace  
The features of a vanish'd face ;  
And o'er his countenance a change  
Swept in a moment, passing strange,  
As if some miracle had been  
Wrought by a Hand divine, unseen ;  
For, oh ! this dear, this cherish'd thought  
His soul in its distress had caught :—  
' I see—I see thy name above,  
Lost Isabel, bright soul of love !  
I read it now, the while I look  
Upon Heaven's star-illumin'd book ;—  
I gaze, until the mystic line  
Distinctly I can there define ;  
Nor should I marvel there to see  
The name that is so dear to me,  
For on that scroll from Hand Divine  
The names of all the blest ones shine.'

And many a time, when long, long years  
Had pass'd away, with loving tears  
When he his weary watch did keep,  
This sailor, traversing the deep,  
Would turn, with earnest, hopeful eyes,  
To read the name upon the skies  
Of her he loved in Paradise.



## THE WIND AND THE SEA.

WEIRD Voice of Night, from o'er the raging Sea,  
Shrieking like a lost spirit round the house,  
Why walest thou, and what wouldst thou with me?

'I come,' methinks the phantom Wind replies,  
'From o'er the waters; on my viewless wings  
I bear the message of despairing cries.

'The lightnings flashing from the vault of Heaven  
Reveal the tatter'd sails and splinter'd spars,  
And cries for "Help" arise, where none is given.

'There, on the watery wilderness afar,  
In vain the vessel wrestles with the storm,  
And eyes are strain'd for Hope's bright morning-star.

'Thou, shelter'd from all dread, why lingerest thou?  
The billows breaking o'er the drifting wreck,  
Thundering reproach, are speaking to thee now.

'Many a widow by the morrow's light  
Shall steal away some relics from the beach,  
That mark the certain terrors of the night.

'Many a child, remembering with despair  
The sound that breaks thy slumber, shall arise  
To-morrow orphan'd, needing all thy care.



‘ From Life’s rough sea, piercing the heavy air,  
(Whilst storm-beat souls wave flags of distress,)  
Goes up to God one long eternal prayer.

‘ Canst thou not help one swimmer nearer shore?  
Or nerve with courage one fast-failing arm?  
God mans the life-boat, grasp thou then one oar.’—

O thou, that speakest through the midnight gloom,  
Art thou the Wind? or is’t some spirit voice,  
Speaking from some far world beyond the tomb?





## LAYS OF LITTLE ONES.

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*'Our God to us the little ones has given  
To nurse for Him, to nurture them for Heaven.  
For this true service He will give His grace—  
Love-light that beams from many a fair young face,  
And prattling tongues that now and then recall  
A sign that innocence survived the Fall.'*

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### BABY'S BIRTHDAY.



WHEN all the Summer flowers were gone,  
And leaves began to fall,  
Heaven sent us one fair Autumn dawn  
A lovelier flower than all.  
Fresh as from Eden's tree of life  
Seem'd that wee pearl-white blossom,  
Dropt as by some good angel's hand  
Upon my darling's bosom.

Oh, joy no heart could e'er forget,  
The hour of peril past,  
When first my gaze the Mother's met,  
Upon our first-born cast !

Her look, that woke a thousand thoughts,  
But one all thoughts above,  
Revealing that blest miracle,  
A Mother's wondrous love.

For dearer grew those tender eyes,  
And dearer that dear face,  
And that new smile, Madonna-wise  
That fill'd with light the place.  
And then Life's sweetest words uprose  
Upon my raptured ear ;  
The words 'our child,' breathed sweet and low,  
Made us to each more dear.

Oh, words of deep significance,  
Stirring the inmost heart ;  
Pleading the soul, with purer faith,  
To choose the better part :  
For what but leading our dear babe  
The way the Saviour trod,  
Should teach us more to lean on Him,  
Our Father and our God ?

We see with reverence our wee flower  
Its little life begin,  
Fresh from the great Creator's hand,  
Untainted yet by sin :  
And cannot wonder at the words  
Of Christ, in comfort given —  
'Suffer ye them to come to Me,  
For even of such is Heaven !'

And so, though Summer flowers were gone,  
And leaves began to fall,  
The blossom of that Autumn dawn  
Still compensates for all :  
And we would praise the gracious Power  
That did the gift impart,  
Brightening, with Love's most precious flower,  
The garden of the Heart.



‘INCUMBRANCES.’

Two children—one a-bright-eyed thing,  
A little girl of scarce three years,  
Fair as the Lily of the Spring,  
Whose beauty and whose name she bears ;—  
And yet perchance should I portray  
Her charms of face, of form, and tongue,  
A thousand lips at once might say  
All these have countless times been sung.

Yet must I pause to paint those eyes,  
Fair as forget-me-nots, whose hue,  
With constant watching of the skies,  
Deepens into the heavenliest blue ;

And I must sing the simple grace  
Of dimpled cheek and shoulders fair—  
How even prettier than her face  
Her flossy floods of golden hair.

Not three years old, this little pet,  
And yet how great a favorite grown,  
Supplanting every love which yet  
Had made within our hearts a throne ;  
This mother's prettiest miniature,  
With blithesome voice and winsome ways,  
Her love, so true, so strong, so pure,  
Like sunlight on our being plays.

Oh ! meaningless the name of Home  
Would be without her joyous greeting,  
The kiss of welcome when I come,  
Our eager and our happy meeting.  
And how much farther off from Heaven  
Our house would be but for the prayer,  
Lisp'd from thy fond lips morn and even—  
O little saint with golden hair !

And safer far we feel at night,  
When o'er our heads our darlings sleep,  
Conscious, though hid from mortal sight,  
That there God's angels watches keep.  
On earth we cannot know the dangers  
Their presence from our household shields,  
Or how much to these heavenly strangers  
We owe the joy existence yields.

When safe from dream-land, fresh from sleep,  
God brings their souls to light of day—  
With stir of footsteps, thoughts too deep  
For words about our heart-strings play.  
Call ye 'disturbing' childish riot  
And prattling voices? Who could greet  
The advent of that awful quiet,  
If Death should still the tottering feet!

And then our bright curl-headed boy—  
O mother, trembling with the bliss,  
The rapture of that tender joy,  
Of each pure passion-breathing kiss,  
For what wouldst thou this pledge exchange,  
This sign that God so deigns to bless?  
This love so wonderful, so strange,  
Interpreted by each caress?

Tell me, what would thy life be worth,  
If death from thy fond arms should take  
The unutter'd love his touch gives birth,  
And all the hopes his smiles awake?  
I know what thou wouldst say, sweet wife,—  
Without our little darling one,  
As desolate would be thy life  
As day without the light of sun.

How dark, how desolate, how drear,  
Would then become Life's chequer'd ways!  
What would avail the vernal cheer,  
Or morning light, or song of praise?

With life itself thou'dst rather part,  
Than thou wouldst have Death's touch dis sever  
Those tiny hands, that heart to heart  
Bind up our names and love together !

'Incumbrances'? yea, think awhile,  
Ye who would dare thus think about it,  
Of Earth without the children's smile ;  
Think even what Heaven could be without it.  
Consider, if from crowded street  
All forms of youthful charm were gone ;  
That looks of age and weary feet,  
The yearning heart could find alone.

God ! what a void in Thy creation  
Would be such loss of innocence !  
Were not another revelation  
Of thy indulgent providence,  
Were not a star or flowret left,  
We should not have such vacant places,  
Or seem so utterly bereft,  
As if we lost the children's faces.



## FIRST STEPS.

DEAR little Daisy, though not near  
To watch thy life unfold, I own  
'Twas pleasant news of thee, to hear  
Thou hadst been seen to 'walk alone.'  
I would I had been there to see  
The joy of thy delighted eyes—  
To hear the ringing laugh of glee  
Which heralded thy new surprise.

Doubtless the cost was many a fall  
(Wise cautions these against conceit)—  
I will not underrate withal  
The triumph of thy baby-feet.  
Not I, for well I know indeed  
What failures first attempts attend,  
What trials of patience must precede  
The point where difficulties end.

But at the news, dear child, I must  
Make prayer, that Heaven thy steps may lead,  
Lest thou in self too much shouldst trust,  
Or lean upon some broken reed,  
As disappointing true delight  
As now when, fearless of a fall,  
Thou striv'st to catch the sunbeam bright  
From paper-flowers upon the wall.



Through Earth beset with sin and strife,  
From these first steps which thou hast trod,  
Heaven grant than mine thy future life  
May be a closer walk with God !  
Be highest Faith, my child, thine own ;  
Lean on the Father's loving hand,  
For we can never walk alone  
In safety to the Promised Land !



### TWO YEARS OLD.

OH ! little, rare, and radiant face, •  
That smilest up to God,  
The flowers of life seem lovelier where  
Thy tiny feet have trod.  
I never thought so wee a thing  
So large a joy could bring ;  
I never pictured so much bliss  
Could bless Love's fairy ring ;  
For never was a spot so charm'd  
By spell of elf or fairy,  
As our fond hearts and happy home  
By little Katie Mary.

So beautiful, so wonderful,  
Her little ways unfold,  
I almost wish she'd always be  
The pet of two years old ;  
And never did I think to life  
Belong'd delights so sweet,  
Before I kiss'd her dimpled cheeks,  
And heard her pattering feet.  
Oh ! then within Love's fairy ring  
God guard this little fairy,  
And guardian angels hover close  
Round darling Katie Mary !

Yea, bless ! and may this bud of Hope  
With angel-grace expand !  
God keep the haunting terror off  
Of Death's remorseless hand !  
O Thou, who lovest us to feel  
Thou hast a Father's heart,  
Grant that our souls be spared the pang  
With so much joy to part !  
And as with innocence divine  
Smiles now our infant fairy,  
With soul as pure in womanhood  
May bloom our Katie Mary !



## THE LITTLE MOTHER.

‘COME, take us to our mother’s room,’  
Two infant orphans said :  
‘We have not wish’d her yet “good night ;”  
Oh, take us not to bed !’

The tears fell from their sister’s cheek ;  
She led them past the door,  
And whisper’d with a broken voice,  
‘Dear mother is no more.’

‘Where is she then ? Oh, tell us where  
Our mother dear is gone !  
She surely loved us both too well  
To leave us here alone.’

‘She’s gone to Heaven,’ the maiden said ;  
‘She watches from the sky ;  
And you will go, if you are good,  
To see her by-and-by.’

‘Oh ! who will be our mother now ?’  
Each little mourner cried :  
‘I’d rather than our mother dear  
God took all else beside.’

She kiss'd their little quivering lips,  
She kiss'd each earnest brow,  
And whisper'd with a gentle voice,  
' I'll be your mother now !'

Celestial was the smile of love  
That flush'd her pallid face ;  
It seem'd as if the mother's soul  
Took then the sister's place.

' Dear little mother,' both replied,  
' We'll love you and obey,  
And pray God will not suffer us  
A wrong to do or say ;

' And we will thank Him in our prayers,  
Who graciously hath given  
A darling mother upon earth,  
As well as one in Heaven !'

That night she wrought a mother's part ;  
She wiped their tears away,  
And led them to their little room,  
Their evening prayers to say.

And whilst she watch'd beside the bed,  
And kiss'd them when asleep,  
She heard a voice as if from Heaven—  
' Be faithful — do not weep !'

And often when with household cares  
Her heart had vainly striven,  
This thought her failing strength renew'd —  
‘ Mother looks down from Heaven !’

God give thee, little mother, strength  
Thy heavy lot to bear ;—  
Angels, smile on her smiles of light,  
And tend her with your care !



### A MOTHER'S HEART.

WHEN sweeping down the stormy Kyle  
Amidst a sea of glistening foam,  
Whilst faded Arran's purple isle,  
Dear thoughts stole o'er my heart of home.

Of Home, beneath whose southern sky  
The myrtle-flowers of life bloom fair—  
Earth's almost worshipp'd trinity,  
Three dear names breathed in fondest prayer.

For on Iona's crowded deck,  
When the chill gust with rain swept wild,  
I saw around a mother's neck  
The clasp'd arms of a little child.

The mother shelter'd with her plaid  
The precious life, the trembling form ;  
The child no longer shrank afraid,  
But smiled upon the gathering storm.

Thou'lt find, I thought, O head soft-curl'd,  
Whate'er thy fate, where'er thou art,  
The warmest place in all the world  
Is nearest to a mother's heart.



### ROBINSON CRUSOE.

(A BOY'S WISH FREELY INTERPRETED.)

LITTLE HAL, when scarcely seven years old,  
Would climb his father's knee,  
And loved to prattle of what one day,  
When a man, he would like to be.

A soldier, a sailor, an engineer,  
A barrister learned in law,  
A parson, a doctor ?—in lives of them all  
He, somehow, discover'd a flaw.

He said, as a soldier, Napoleon,  
When he climb'd the Alpine snow,  
Was doubtless a brave man ; but braver was he  
Who cut the great tunnel below,

And made the iron-way under the steeps,  
For purposes good and wise,  
And not to conquer unwary foes  
By superior strategies.

A sailor's ?—his was a pleasanter life  
Than in barrack or camp could be ;  
And better than epaulette, red-cloth, or spurs,  
He loved a toss on the sea.

But as for a lawyer's dreary task,  
To pore o'er some dusty deed,  
He said, he was sure he should fall asleep  
Whenever he tried to read.

A doctor ? No, no, 'twas not pleasant enough,  
To be hearing for ever and aye  
The ailments of others, with only the chance  
Of taking those ailments away.

A parson's ?—for this little Hal declared,  
He was not good enough, quite ;  
He hated long sermons so much, he knew  
'Twould kill him to have one to write.

He would not, like Alexander, be great,  
Nor yet like Tom Thumb be too small;  
'But there was a man,' he said gravely, 'I think  
The wisest and best of them all.

'And much would I like to be great as he,'  
Little Hal said at length, with a smile—  
'Like Robinson Crusoe, who, when he was cast  
Alone on a desolate isle,

'With no one to help, did not sit down to mope,  
Nor wasted he even a day  
On the beach, in the vain and profitless hope  
Some vessel would take him away;

'But turn'd with a strong hand, ready and skill'd;  
Made the best of all he found near;  
And rather rejoiced because there were none  
With his plans to interfere.

'He built for himself a pleasant home;  
He could garden, could bake, and could brew;  
Could even be happy alone by himself,  
For he always found plenty to do.'





## FATHER.

As the frail plant that looks towards the sun  
Is conscious, that for each life-giving ray  
With all its blossoms it cannot repay  
The blessed gifts of that celestial one ;  
So, Father, from my heart sweet memories turn,  
As flowers to Heaven, remembering thy love ;  
And with resistless gratitude I yearn  
For that wherewith my truth of heart to prove,  
For all thy care, thy toil, thy ways of truth—  
Life-lessons, starry beacons in my youth.  
These to repay though far beyond my power,  
Yet give I that with which thou wouldst not part,  
That violet of existence, heavenliest flower—  
The pure affection of a child's warm heart !



## MOTHER.

'FATHER who art in Heaven'—how often rise  
These words in invocation to the skies ;  
Yet there are kindred words almost as dear—  
*Mother* and *Home*.—how grateful to the ear !  
They sink into the heart, awaking there  
Remembrances of simple hymn or prayer  
Taught long, long years ago— words that have risen,  
And saved the child from the grim Tempter's snare,  
With their sweet breathings of the bliss of Heaven.  
Oh ! my own Mother's smile and gentle word,  
When parted from her, I have seen and heard  
As in a dream ; to which such spells were given,  
That I can never recognise as brother  
One who could lightly breathe the hallow'd name of  
Mother !



## FAIRY GOOD-TEMPER.

Of all the fays of Fairyland, there is no elfin sprite  
So welcome to the World's bleak ways, or brings such  
    pure delight,  
As the Fairy call'd 'Good-Temper.' Wherever she  
    has dwelt,  
Like Heaven's best Guardian Angel, she makes her  
    presence felt.

Her strongest foe is Discontent; and if her path he  
    bars,  
She will not leave, to bless your life, her home beyond  
    the stars.  
But if you keep that evil sprite far from your heart  
    and home,  
'Tis wondrous with what loving smile with you through  
    life she'll roam.

And marvellous indeed are spells that to this Fay  
    belong,  
For she can make the saddest voice break forth in  
    sweetest song;  
And when the storms of Passion rise, or adverse  
    winds rave loud,  
You'll see her rainbow-presence gleam across the  
    darkest cloud.

And often o'er a grief-worn face her spirit loves to  
pass,  
Leaving a smile, like Spring's first flush upon the  
meadow grass ;  
And eyes which fill'd with angry glance I've seen  
with love grow fond,  
The moment that they felt the touch of this Enchan-  
ter's wand.

I've seen some children, when in school, with sullen  
faces bend  
Over their books, because they drove away their Fairy-  
friend :  
So all the printed pages seem'd to grimly mock and  
glare,  
And difficulties thickly rose which need not have been  
there.

For when the Fairy's wings swept by across the self-  
same books,  
A spell was wrought, as all could see by light of  
cheerful looks :  
The dormant letters woke in words, exciting strange  
surprise,  
And o'er the page that seem'd so dull moved  
Thought's bright pageantries.

One little girl, when music taught, her fate would oft  
deplore :  
She said, ' Like grinning teeth to me seem notes upon  
the score.'

At length she got this sprite to help her fingers o'er  
the keys,  
And melodies were heard as sweet as bird-songs  
through the trees.

And once I knew a wretched man, though he had  
house and fields,  
And wealth, and everything of life that human comfort  
yields,  
Whose home was blank and desolate as home on  
earth could be,  
Because he kept this sprite away by lack of charity.

And yet I've seen her gracious smile beam from the  
cottage-door;  
For, if neglected by the rich, she'll not forsake the  
poor.  
She loves to bring a gleam of joy to sorrow's darken'd  
room—  
To leave a blessing, like a flower upon a loved one's  
tomb.

Sometimes she is so full of joy she can't restrain her  
voice;  
In factory and in workshop, she'll even there rejoice,  
Above the crashing sounds of wheels—or, if you'll  
listen now,  
You'll hear her in the whistle of the boy behind the  
plough.

Blest labour-lightening spirit, she countless blessings  
showers :

The barren heath beneath her feet becomes a path of  
flowers.

She makes the most unpleasant tasks some satisfaction  
yield,

Which but for her bright glance would lie for ever  
unreveal'd.

Alas ! that there should be so few who keep this  
happy sprite

For ever their companion, to minister delight ;

For it does not always take a *word* to startle this dear  
Fay,—

A single thought of wrong will make her, sorrowing,  
turn away.

Then rest with us, Good-Temper !—Though Fairy-  
lore may seem

The half-forgotten memory of some bright vanish'd  
dream,

And though our faith in elf and fay with growing  
years depart,

Long may thy happy spirit move about our home  
and heart !



## THE BUTTERFLY.

A FABLE FOR LITTLE FRIENDS.

THE sun was brightly shining one early day in Spring,  
When a young butterfly was seen to flutter on the  
wing :

He thought, because a few warm rays were shining o'er  
the plain,  
That Summer, with her flowers and fruits, had come  
to earth again.

But while he gaily flutter'd on, and said, 'How glad  
am I

The dreary days and darksome nights at last have all  
gone by !'

An older butterfly, conceal'd within a shelter'd nook,  
Cast on its young companion a sad and pitying look.

'Come back, come back, poor foolish one !' he said,  
with warning tone ;

'These sunbeams are deluding thee—the winter is  
not gone ;

And if thou wilt not listen now, too late, too late  
thou'lt find

There's poison in the nipping frost, and terror in the  
wind.'

But, with a proud conceited air, the little butterfly  
Look'd on its prudent counsellor with mischief-mean-  
ing eye ;  
Then flutter'd gaily far away adown the sunbeam's  
track,  
Though still he heard the warning voice, ' Poor foolish  
one, come back !'

But he replied, ' I'll not go back—away, away I'll  
roam,  
And find 'mong fairest roses a bright and happy home.  
Are there not bright blue skies above, and sunshine  
glad and gay ?  
Why should I longer in this place a lonesome prisoner  
stay ?

' I'll follow where the sunbeams lead—I am not blind,  
not I ;  
Can I not see the shining light ? oh yes, away I'll fly !'  
And while the sun seem'd o'er the fields to spread a  
cloth of gold,  
The vain and heedless butterfly grew still more vain  
and bold.

But by-and-by he thought 'twas time to see the flowers  
so fair,  
For where the sunlight did not fall the ground was  
damp and bare ;  
And then the first misgivings rose within his thought-  
less mind,  
And he began with timorous eye to cast a glance behind.



But, oh, too late! for, lo, the clouds had gather'd in the  
sky ;  
The trees began to tremble as the chill winds whisper'd  
by ;  
And when the night came on so dark, in terror and  
dismay  
He found upon the wild, bleak heath that he had lost  
his way.

He thought, while weary, sad, and cold, of that warm  
shelter'd spot,  
Which, had he listen'd to the wise, would still have  
been his lot ;  
And now, he wish'd he had not turn'd so thoughtlessly  
away  
From one who with a friendly voice entreated him to  
stay.

But all too late repentance came: so, weary and alone,  
At length with broken wings he fell upon a rough, wet  
stone ;  
And by-and-by the wailing winds did yet more bitter  
blow,  
And he was buried deep beneath the thickly-falling  
snow.

So, little ones, whenever you may think that you know  
best,  
And some good friend's kind word you slight, with  
vain and foolish jest.  
Think of the hapless butterfly that perish'd in the ice  
Because he thought himself too wise to need a friend's  
advice.

FIRST PRAYERS.

A LITTLE boy, who might have seen  
Some summers six or seven,  
On bended knees breathed sweet and low  
A simple prayer to Heaven.

The words had been in infancy  
Taught by a Mother's care ;  
But though Death took her from the child,  
Death could not take the prayer ;

For, as if she bent o'er him now,  
The self-same words pray'd he —  
' Dear Father and dear Mother bless,  
And take us, God, to Thee !'

But here his little sister spoke  
(She kiss'd his earnest brow),  
And said, ' You need not, brother dear,  
Pray for our Mother now.

' She's gone where sorrow is unknown,  
And sin has pass'd away ;  
And for the blest that are in Heaven  
We need no more to pray.'

'But,' said the little child, who saw  
His sister's tear-drops fall,  
'Oh, if I alter'd what she taught,  
I could not pray at all !

'Yet if I need not pray for her  
Each night and morn, I'll pray,  
That she will ask the King of Heaven  
To take me soon away —

'To take me home to her, where we  
Death shall no longer fear ;—  
I did not know I loved her so  
When she was always near !

'Come, sister, lay your hand again  
There, softly, on my brow ;  
For I fancy, while 'tis resting there,  
Mother is near me now.

'And do not take the light away,  
But, like she used to tell,  
Talk to me of the Angel-world,  
Where she is gone to dwell ;

'And smooth my pillow ere I sleep,  
As she was wont to do ;  
For more you seem like her to be,  
The more shall I love you.'

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## LOST LITTLE ONES.

O GRIEF of griefs to part  
With the little ones, the darling ones,  
That nestle round the heart !  
Those we most fondly nursed  
Death seems to beckon first,  
For reasons that we cannot comprehend.

Dread One, why dost thou rock  
To sleep the little ones, the darling ones,  
The flowers of the flock ?  
Why dost thou steal away,  
Almost ere dawn of Day,  
The smiles that are the sunbeams of the heart ?

Speak to me, Spectre dread,  
About these little ones, these darling ones,  
That, with such noiseless tread,  
Thou bear'st from heart and home,  
The silent vale to roam,  
Ere us to reach the Country of the Blest.

Speak to me ; let me hear  
About the little ones, the darling ones,  
Grown now so doubly dear,  
Since thou our hearts hast taught  
The sorrow of that thought,  
And the depths of misery in that one word—Gone !

'Gone!'—dare ye utter it,  
Among the little ones, the darling ones,  
That round about you flit ;  
Your heart, whate'er your fate,  
Must grow compassionate,  
To think how stern a visitant is Death !

Still silent ; canst thou tell  
Nought of the little ones, the darling ones,  
That here no longer dwell ?  
Thou'rt dumb ; thou dost not know  
The secret thrill of woe,  
That yearns in tears of sorrow for reply.

O little radiant face,  
Bright 'mong the little ones, the darling ones,  
Of the celestial place—  
Thou answerest, cherub voice ;  
Thou bidd'st my soul rejoice ;  
I hear the fluttering of angel wings !

Breaking the blank of Death,  
I hear the voices of the little ones, the darling ones.  
With music's sweetest breath,  
They're calling, calling now,  
That I resign'd may bow,  
Nor question what I cannot understand.

They call—they seem to say,  
Those voices of the little ones, the darling ones,  
'We've only flown away'

To the Father's Home of Light,  
Where the child-heart's pure delight  
Shall never lose its beauty, or decay !'

Far all our powers above,  
To shield the little ones, the darling ones,  
Even with all our love,  
From troubles that we dread :  
Therefore the Saviour said,  
'Suffer the little ones to come to Me !'



### THE LITTLE GRAVE.

MOTHER, you told me when we heard the bell toll'd,  
sad and slow,  
When to old Robin's funeral we saw the mourners go,  
The churchyard then so dreary, so flowerless and cold,  
Was the last home of the weary, the rest-place for the  
old ;  
So never did I feel afraid to pass the tombstones by—  
I knew I was not very old, and thought I could not  
die.  
But, Mother ! 'neath the yew-trees, where we saw his  
funeral pass,  
I saw, oh ! such a little mound, half hidden in the  
grass ;

And I could not get it out of mind, for when my  
prayers I said,  
I thought of the cold churchyard, and that little narrow  
bed.  
And then I knew that such as I Death sometimes  
takes away ;  
That if I were not good, I too might there be made  
to stay ;  
And I pray'd God would not bid me go in the cold,  
cold grass to lie,  
Because I love you, love you so, I do not want to  
die.



### GOING TO SCHOOL.

LITTLE Norah, with her lightly dancing auburn  
curls,  
Pretty face of rosy dimples, loved by all the boys and  
girls,  
Every morning passes by my window with such joyous  
looks,  
That I often wait to watch her with her slate and  
lesson-books ;  
Always with a glad 'Good morning' cheerily she  
passes by,  
Music in her merry voice, and pleasure beaming from  
her eye ;

Never childishly complaining, fretting at the master's  
rule,  
Always cheerful is the picture—little Norah going to  
school.

Ah, my child ! far less of wisdom sages have in fable  
wrought  
Than the philosophic moral thou unconsciously hast  
taught ;  
For I often stay and loiter, dreading Life's uncertain  
din,  
Dreading oftentimes my duties ere my labours I begin :  
But thou teachest how my task-work may become  
delightful too,  
How I daily may discover joy in all I have to do ;  
And I learn this consolation—Toils are but life-lessons  
given  
By the great Almighty Master, educating souls for  
Heaven.



## SO TIRED.

It is our dear little 'Lily,'  
Weary with overmuch play :  
She has been all day in the sunshine,  
In meadows sweet with hay ;



Gathering June's wild flowers  
From copse and green hedgerow—  
The fox-glove, brier-rose, and woodbine ;  
She knows where the fairest blow.

And now the day is over,  
And the vesper-song is sung,  
She droops in the arms of her father,  
And still is her prattling tongue.

She droops, like one of her wild flowers,  
Upon her father's breast,  
Feeling so safe to be borne in his arms  
To her quiet place of rest.

He lovingly looks on her winsome face  
As he carries her up the stairs,  
And clasps her close in his fond embrace,  
With a heart brimful of prayers ;—

Prayers that a stronger Father  
Will shield from earthly harms,  
And keep the beautiful darling  
In His everlasting arms ;

Will send His guardian angels  
Around her watch to keep,  
And bring her dreams of Heaven  
Through all the hours of sleep ;

And give through life the child's heart-faith,  
To seek a resting-place  
In the arms of her Heavenly Father,  
And a Saviour's fond embrace ;

And grace to trust His promise,  
That she may awake erewhile  
From the dreamless sleep to the golden dawn,  
In the light of God's glorious smile ;

To gather the blossoms of Heaven,  
And taste of the joys they yield,  
Where the scythe of Death sweeps never  
A flower from the fadeless field.



## ASLEEP.

ERE the silent hours of gloom  
Come to little Lily's room—  
'Tis a pretty place of rest,  
Safe and warm as downy nest—  
Nestling in her tiny bed,  
Softly rests the pillow'd head.  
See what floods of golden hair  
Ripple o'er the pillow fair ;  
Pale her brow as drifted snow,  
Or the wings that hover now

Of the guardian angel-band,  
Bringing from the better land  
Dreams—fair flowers that angels cull  
From God's garden ' Beautiful,'  
To scatter them, with love intense,  
Upon the sleep of Innocence.  
Lo ! she smiles, her dimples move —  
Does she feel their kiss of love ?  
Is it perfect consciousness,  
They are near to guard and bless,  
That keeps her spirit undismay'd,  
Never 'in the dark' afraid ?  
True, trusting child, thou teachest me,  
With eyes of faith and hope, to see  
In sorrow's gloomiest hour of night  
God's face, in darkness as in light !





## IN SUMMER AND HARVEST DAYS.

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*'The gracious Year warms with maturer love.'*

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### THE NIGHTINGALE.



NIGHTINGALE one Summer made  
His nest, above the greenest sod,  
Deep in a dense sequester'd shade  
Where seldom human footsteps trod,  
And to the gentle flowers and trees  
Contented sang his melodies.

One night a lover of sweet song,  
Passing the forest, chanced to hear  
The flute-like prelude, and the long  
Tremolo, with cadenza clear.  
Ravishing was each thrilling bar  
That died on beam of moon and star.

‘Thou glorious Bird of Night!’ he said—

‘Alas! my spirit feels ’tis pity  
In solitude such gifts to shed,  
With hearts athirst in town and city  
For such an elixir, to cheer  
The midnight of their souls so drear.

‘How would the toilers there delight  
In every sympathetic note,  
That here, unnoticed in the night,  
Is quiver’d from thy matchless throat!  
Oh, would their weary spirits heard  
Thy heavenly song, enchanting Bird!

The Nightingale paused in his lay  
The Poet’s flattering words to hear,  
Resolving that he would not stay  
In lonesome woods; but build next year  
Nearer the haunts of men, that they  
Might hear his music night and day.

So with the warmth of early June,  
Next year, from hedge of pathway-field  
The passing crowd heard the sweet tune,  
That to their souls for love appeal’d;  
And oftentimes the warbling bird  
The praises of the traveller heard.

His nest was in a thorn; close by,  
‘Midst fragrant flowers, his mate reposed;  
But soon he found, to prying eye  
His dearest secrets were disclosed.

'The singer, not the song,' quoth he,  
'Excites most curiosity!'

Some passers-by, with curious eyes,  
    Would stare to see the singer's coat :  
'His plumage should be fine, his size  
    Be large,' they said, 'with such a throat !'  
And mischief-makers would not rest  
Until they found the little nest.

They would not leave that nest alone ;  
    Not for his songs so much they cared,  
As to indulge sarcastic tone  
    About his mate, or young ones rear'd.  
One said, 'Whilst nought but song he gives,  
I wonder how the creature lives.'

And though poor Philomel would sing,  
    With sad beseeching notes, 'I came  
Amongst you trusting joy to bring,  
    But I, alas ! excite but blame,'—  
His pleading voice appeal'd in vain ;  
With motives false they charged his strain.

And, when discover'd, he one day  
    (With grief at such ingratitude)  
Heard a vain critic falsely say,  
    'The nest the singer makes is rude ;  
His young, alas ! poor shelter find,  
So much to song he gives his mind.'

But thus the Nightingale replied,  
 'The penalty for human praise  
 Is dear indeed ; the flattering pride  
 Of idle tongues poorly repays  
 Poet or Bird ; rose-leaves of Fame  
 Are set with piercing thorns of blame.'

At length he found that even his nest  
 And dearest ties men did invade ;  
 Their cruel hands upon the breast  
 Of his beloved mate were laid.  
 His notes of grief appeal'd in vain,  
 What cared they for the minstrel's pain ?

And so, with bleeding, broken heart,  
 The singer died. But even then  
 False tongues would not with scandal part ;  
 And o'er his grave still envious men  
 Recall'd his errors — but their tongue  
 Spoke little of the songs he sung.



THE QUEEN OF THE HIVE.

UPON a grassy mound I musing lay  
One summer afternoon, in the still shade  
Of fragrant jasmine and clematis bowers,  
In one of those old gardens of the West,  
Where flowers blossom at their own sweet will,  
Half hidden in the grass and tangled ferns,  
Some opening to the sun and amorous breeze,  
And others to the dainty kiss of dew.  
The whisper'd music of the dancing leaves  
And trickling water from an old moss-fount,  
And the mellifluous refrains of the thrush,  
Were made more slumbrous by the hum of bees,  
And so I fell asleep. But in my dream  
The drowsy music of the droning bees  
Seem'd by enchantment grown articulate,  
And I remember this, the song I heard  
Sung by the Queen of that industrious realm,  
Whose busy hive, close by among the trees,  
Was magnified by sleep into a World :—

I'm Queen, I'm Queen of a fairy realm—  
Of woodland, vale, and lea ;  
And many a Queen of the race of men  
Might learn to envy me.



My people I love, and they love me,  
 And all are so loyal and true,  
 That their chief delight is to work, and live  
 For the good that they can do.

They have built me a palace richly dight,  
 And they bring me precious store  
 From rings which Fairy-feet have blest  
 With wealth for evermore.

No Fairy-queen of sparkling grot  
 Can boast such gems as I :—  
 My riches are brought from every clime  
 Beneath the changeful sky.

In Spring my people sally forth,  
 When the spirit of love first wakes,  
 When with silver laughter the meadow stream  
 From the mossy covert breaks ;

And the primrose, and violet, and crocus bright,  
 Are brought by the Flower Queen's train,  
 To woo us again to the world, that we  
 May forget the wind and the rain.

I know the Fairies all by name,  
 Whose homes are the fragrant flowers,  
 And often I see them as they pass  
 To the dance in the moonlight hours.

I wander in cool and ferny grots,  
Or sail in a rose-leaf boat  
Down the crystal stream in the golden light,  
Where the lily-flowers float.

And many a blue-eyed maiden fair  
I've seen in these fairy spots,  
Stooping to gather the graceful flowers  
They call forget-me-nots.

And I read the secret in her eyes,  
When I see her, in later hours,  
Give kiss for kiss to the pride of her heart,  
For whom she has gather'd the flowers !

In Summer the jasmine woos me forth,  
And she cools me with daintiest wine ;  
And a wild enchantment through me thrills,  
As her white arms round me twine.

Sometimes for my feast the strawberry blooms ;  
And when from its sweets I whirl,  
The currant puts forth her juicy gems  
Of jet, and ruby, and pearl !

The rose for me is a palace grand,  
And I pass through its portals fair,  
And the richest feast in its banquet-hall  
The Fairy sprites prepare.

And the Fairies that dwell in the heart of the rose  
For beauty all others eclipse,  
And so warm a welcome their fair queen gives  
That I faint on her perfumed lips.

And when the sky is shadow'd with clouds,  
And I need the spells of prayer,  
Oh ! the holiest shrine is the lily pale,  
And I often worship there.

And music exquisite is mine ;  
But the sweetest that faintly swells  
Is sound too pure for mortals' ears,  
As it peals from the gay blue-bells.

I know the language of the birds,  
And I list to their tales of love —  
The warbled joys of the nightingale,  
Or the lark as he soars above.

I love that poet of all the birds,  
As he soars from the dewy sod —  
The poet of birds, because he sings  
Nearest to Heaven and God.

And when to my palace at night I come,  
With greetings glad to hear,  
My people show me the riches they've brought  
From lands afar and near.

And they feed me with luscious honey-mead,  
And carefully guard my crown,  
Whilst 'midst fragrance and music I fall asleep  
On a bed of rose-leaf down.



### VOICES OF THE TREES.

WHAT are the green trees saying,  
In the dim forest aisles?  
Those glorious branches swaying  
'Neath Summer's golden smiles—  
The voluntaries rolling  
At noon and twilight dim—  
What means the solemn music?  
Is't prayer or vesper hymn?

To such harmonious music  
I feel there should be words:  
Oh! have the trees their language,  
Like joyous-hearted birds?  
With whom hold they communion  
Through the long Summer hours?  
Talk they with their Creator,  
Or only to the flowers?

Kings of the mighty forest,  
 With garlands at your feet,  
 I love your mystic language,  
 So weird-like and so sweet.  
 Ye seem to teach my spirit,  
 While looking from the sod,—  
 'For life, for strength, for glory,  
 Look always up to God !'



### SUMMER.

L

O HAPPY Summer, waited long !  
 My heart yearns over thee and thine ;  
 My spirit breaks forth into song,  
 To feel thy touch of glory mine.  
 So long I waited through the night  
 Of Winter desolate and drear,  
 That, craving for thy love and light,  
 Often I cried, O Summer dear,  
 Art thou for ever gone from me,  
 And must I weep in vain for thee ?  
 The bleak, chill winds, that raved so loud  
 About the black rocks of Despair—  
 The uncertain light, the frowning cloud,  
 The omnipresent phantom, Care—

The streaming lines of Winter rain—  
A touch of ice, a withering breath,  
Reminded me that hope was vain ;  
That on the grave of vanish'd love  
Faded were even the flowers of Death.

II.

Sometimes I wander'd by the Sea—  
I knew some pearls slept in the deep,  
Kept with a miser's grasp from me,  
For chill waves murmur'd, 'We will keep  
Our treasure hoards from thee.'  
And I grew to hate the passionate Deep,  
With its false lights that lured me on,  
Always moaning for those asleep,  
And talking of things that were gone.  
So I went to the River to tell my grief ;  
And, as it rush'd by to the Sea,  
It said, 'O Child of Unbelief,  
Learn thou the truth from me.  
I would not, no, not if I could, go back ;  
For bright is the distant sea ;  
And the Future can give, with its radiant shore,  
Exhaustless treasures of love, far more  
Than the Past, to you and to me.'  
So I loved the River, though dark and cold,  
That hurriedly bore me away  
From even the memories of old,  
As it sang of a brighter day.

Sometimes its waters became so chill,  
That terror crept into my breast,  
As it bore me, against the strongest will,  
Past scenes which I loved, and love fondly still,  
Where my heart sigh'd for rest.  
But on, on, on ! ' Not yet,' it said—  
' God only stays the stream.'  
So my spirit was borne like a soul sped home  
By the Angel of Death in a dream.

## III.

But never, oh ! never, shall I forget  
The last wild stormy day,  
When Winter pass'd away,  
And Earth with countless tears was wet,  
And the Sun, like a dying king, had set  
In the west with a crimson stain.  
Then, 'midst the roar of the wind and the rain,  
O'er the watery waste afar  
Fitfully shudder'd one trembling star ;  
And that star of God was Love,  
So far the earth above.  
Its light so holy, so calm, sublime,  
Stream'd over the rifted wrecks of Time,  
And over the passionate Sea.  
And a voice came forth as an angel's voice,  
Breathing sweet music to me :—  
' Rejoice, with the spirit of Love, rejoice !  
The Winter has pass'd away,  
And over your heart in splendour breaks  
The dawn of a Summer day !'

TOGETHER.

BRIGHT was the sunshine of that August day,  
And o'er the harvest fields the sun look'd down  
With regal splendour, like the eye of God,  
Beaming with blessing o'er the golden corn,  
That waved in plenty like a sunset sea ;  
When, from the cottage 'neath the aspen-trees,  
The music of whose ever-whisp'ring leaves  
Mingles with earliest dreams of happiness,  
We pass'd together, darling Kate and I ;—  
Together ; but not yet had lips confess'd  
The secret ecstasy that thrills the soul  
Upon its first discovery that Love  
Has grown the strong necessity of life.  
Fair was the brow of Heaven that joyous morn,  
While round us smiled a summer legacy  
Of ripen'd fruits, full ears, and fragrant flowers.  
All things rejoiced around us ; so we grew  
To love each other, how we scarce could tell,  
And yet as closely twined in trust our hearts  
As the convolvulus, whose fair white arms,  
With the clematis, garlanded the trees  
In an embrace of beauty, and such love  
We felt they were companions until death.  
All things rejoiced around us ;—even the lark,



Hid in the snow-white fleece of brooding cloud,  
Over our heads emptied its heart of song,  
Which mingled with the pure ecstatic bliss  
That rippled round our souls. And then the sounds,  
Borne on the breeze, of gleaners in the fields,  
Recall'd to mind the happy tale of Ruth ;  
For, with the sunlight of the harvest-home,  
The sounds of sickle and of rustling sheaves,  
The pathos of that Hebrew idyll steals  
Ever about the heart as fresh and strong  
As if the tale were told but yesterday  
(For true Love's story never can grow old).  
We seem'd to hear the voices of the Past—  
'The Lord be with you !' and the heart-response—  
'The Lord bless thee !' and when our glances met,  
She, like the modest gleaner, must have felt  
That in mine eyes she had that day found grace  
Born of the soul's desire, from which sprang trust  
She would with me abide, and 'midst God's sheaves  
Of blessing glean Love's fair Elysian fields  
Beneath the shadow of Almighty wings.  
And then above all other thoughts grew strong  
The hope, that she would answer—' I will go,  
Go where thou goest, where thou diest, die.'

And thus we journey'd to the quiet nook  
Beside the sea, the beautiful blue sea,  
Thrice dear to every heart when Love first dawns,  
Because the happy lover joys to think,  
Immeasurable, exhaustless as its depths,  
With all their buried treasure, is his love.

Oh, Katie ! watching by you near that shore,  
The sea that day sharing our spirits' calm,  
The sunlight spangling the long line of beach,  
And spreading halo of divinest light  
Upon the wild sea-plants and flowers that fringe  
The sand, whose life and every joy depend  
On the salt kisses of the passionate Sea—  
In that dear place, with heart so full of bliss  
Amidst such light and love, I wonder'd not  
That men should give so aptly to the spot  
The heart-remember'd name of Felix-stowe.



#### SUMMER VOICES.

Oh, love all things lovely, and strive to forget  
That earth must be blemish'd with sin and regret !  
A summer all sunshine — the calm of life's sea —  
Be thankful whilst God gives such blessing to thee.

Now look up to Heaven with heart full of delight,  
And see the clouds passing with glory bedight ;  
But think not, whilst gazing upon them, that they  
Must soon from the firmament vanish away.

And love the blue waves of the wonderful deep,  
When the storms are by Summer lull'd softly to sleep ;  
But think not, whilst watching the slumbering wave,  
It soon may engulf the proud bark of the brave.

And love the sweet roses, that smile on us now  
From the light leafy spray of the beautiful bough ;  
And pity the man who, beholding them smile,  
Talks only of earth's imperfections the while.

And love the bright blossoms, their exquisite grace—  
What matter to us a wee leaf out of place,  
When they seem from their hearts to pour all that  
they can  
To stimulate love in the cold heart of man ?

And love all the wild birds, which, happy and gay,  
Enjoy all that's bright, heeding nought of decay ;  
And turn a deaf ear, whilst their melodies float,  
To connoisseur quibbles of ' faults in a note.'

Ah ! pity the vain, and the sinful conceit  
Of those who make bitter what God has made sweet ;  
Who, ignorant often of all they condemn,  
Would tarnish the worth of the loveliest gem.

Be not like the cynic, who beauty dissects,  
Whose eyes are but microscopes seeing defects,  
Whose lips never utter unqualified praise,  
Though the loveliest things of the earth meet his gaze.

But keep thou the spirit confiding and true,  
That strives to have always bright objects in view ;  
That speaks of a brother in charity kind,  
And seeks not his faults or his failings to find.

BALMORAL.

I stood by the palace, the pride of the North,  
In harvest-crown'd valleys of brave Lochnagar,  
When Teuton and Gaul were in legions led forth,  
And Europe was stunn'd by the thunders of war.  
The ensign of liberty waved in the breeze  
From the towers of Balmoral ; and joyous to me  
The songs of the reapers came up through the trees,  
With the murmuring-plash of the waters of Dee.

The cloud that was shadow'd on slopes overhead,  
Like the Angel of Peace seem'd a mantle to throw ;  
Whilst Jehovah's own hands were in blessing outspread  
O'er the sheaves in the harvest-fields gather'd below.  
But, alas ! from my spirit I could not dispel  
The thought of the Reaper whose dread name is  
Death ;  
Who gather'd his sheaves, amidst sword, shot, and shell,  
In fields of which France speaks with grief-bated  
breath.

I thought of the monarch who challenged the fray,  
And offer'd his son, the ' baptism of fire,'  
A sacrifice, ready to die on that day  
To satisfy France in her evil desire ;—  
Who sought the grim Reaper, himself, in the rank  
That the conqueror vanquish'd ; but sought him in  
vain ;  
Whilst the star of his destiny hopelessly sank,  
Amidst groans of the dying, o'er graves of the slain.

It was then that a cloud from the west swiftly rose,  
 And, hastily weeping its thunder-drops, pass'd ;  
 And briefly was broken the mountain's repose,  
 Its brow with a shadow of gloom overcast ;  
 When again through the mists the sun's splendid  
 beams broke,  
 Dispelling with glory the harvester's fears,  
 And a new sense of joy in my spirit awoke,  
 For Nature more lovely shone, fresh from her tears.

And I said, Would that War were a dread that had  
 been,  
 And was gone like the cloud that had dropt earth  
 its showers ;  
 That Peace, like a river, flow'd calm and serene—  
 Its banks, like the Dee's, fairy carpets of flowers ;  
 That I, 'midst these beauties, that moment could feel  
 The hideous vision of War was a dream ;  
 That in darkness and death the last flash of the steel  
 Had vanish'd, restoring Peace reigning supreme ;—

Peace swathed like the mountains with rainbow of  
 light,  
 That leaves no dark stain when its glories depart,  
 But wakens pure raptures of joy at the sight,  
 With memories ravishing, dear to the heart.  
 Ambition may gloat o'er the crimson-dyed laurel,  
 The bays from the clutch of the vanquish'd that fall :  
 But give me such peace as surrounds thee, Balmoral,  
 With love and with loyalty dearer than all !

Instead of the war-smoke, the mist of the mountains ;  
The evergreen pines for the battle array ;  
Instead of the grief-tears from heart-broken fountains,  
The shower from the sombre clouds rolling away ;  
Instead of the death-dealing needle-gun's rattle,  
The crag-leaping waterfall's dash to the sea ;  
Instead of the crimson-stain'd field of the battle,  
The heather that fringes the banks of the Dee.

*August, 1870.*



### IN TOWN.

FAR from these sultry streets, to scenes of early song  
My thoughts will rove ; they love to be brooding  
there,  
Far from these haunts of want and squalor and wrong,  
In the peaceful country calm, the balm of fragrant  
air.

Sick of the odours that rise from this social fen,  
And the heat of ceaseless strife, my heart desponds.  
Oh, but to breathe ! to feel God's breath again  
Upon my aching brow, without these city bonds !

Dark spots may mark where bean-flowers scented the  
lea,

Yet many a green oasis between them starts ;  
But here the plague-spots blacken all, and Misery  
Rideth with rough-shod feet over breaking hearts.

What matter a few fall'n leaves crimson'd with autumn's  
glow

(Like first-loves destined first to lose their grace) ;  
What are they, to the bleeding feet that to and fro  
Pace the courts and alleys of Death in this crowded  
place ?

I yearn for a harvest of Good, for my spirit indeed  
Knows well, in these places around me of sorrow  
and blight,  
How many to-day God's harvest-blessings need,  
Crying, like Goethe at Death's gate, ' More light !'

For these, for a purer river of life, I yearn—  
Would they could now the cool green pastures roam,  
Where, set in emerald seas of grass and fern,  
The meadow-sweet \* breaks into flecks of foam.

Would that their weary feet could tread the aisles  
Beneath the forest's fretted vault of leaves,  
Their sickly children see God's glorious smiles,  
And hear the swallows twittering in the eaves !

\* *Spiræa almaria.*

Barren the soul and cold the heart that can  
Deny its sympathy, whene'er appeal'd,  
To help to give a child or suffering man  
A glimpse of glory of the harvest field.



### TO TIME.

O TIME! thou changest all things: the beautiful and  
bright  
Plead vainly for thy favours, in darkness and in light;  
Thou changest with relentless hand the most enchant-  
ing place;  
Thou leav'st thy fatal signature on every lovely  
face.  
Thy shadows first unheeded fall, but when we feel thy  
breath  
Across Life's fields of asphodel, we dread thee more  
than Death.  
The catacombs of Memory their spectres owe to thee;  
Yet, though thou art so terrible, one boon I crave of  
thee:—  
I ask thee, not to spare the form of youth's idolatry,  
To check thy mastery o'er the mind, thy powers o'er  
memory;



I do not pray thee to restrain, in life's ambrosial  
 bowers,  
 The spell with which thou steal'st away the bloom  
 from Beauty's flowers :  
 Oh, no ! I ask not such of thee ; this boon I crave  
 alone—  
 That thou wouldst spare the Love that in my heart has  
 made its throne ;  
 That never may its joys grow old, its fairy hopes  
 decay,  
 And thou mayst blanch the glowing cheek, and ebon  
 locks turn grey.



### THE EVE OF DEATH.

MOTHER, open wide the window ! Though I've often  
 gazed before,  
 Yet I feel that I should like to look upon the earth  
 once more,  
 And to hear the rippling ocean, and behold the azure  
 sky,  
 Whilst the evening sun is setting—for the last time  
 ere I die.

Mother, yonder I am tracing, in the quiet, tranquil  
    skies,  
Forms of angels bright and glorious, who look down  
    with loving eyes ;  
And methinks I hear their whispers, telling me I soon  
    must go  
To a radiant world above me, so unlike our world  
    below ;

Where the flowers are everlasting, and the skies are  
    ever fair,  
And incessant songs of rapture float upon the perfumed  
    air.  
Ah ! the echo of that music in my dreams I oft have  
    heard,  
Sweeter than the fountain's ripple, or the warblings of  
    a bird.

See, the harvest moon is rising ; gleaners homeward  
    wend their way,  
For the Night with muffled music lulls to sleep the  
    weary Day ;  
And the butterfly is sleeping lightly on the fragrant  
    rose,  
While the birds, which sang their vespers, on the  
    dewy boughs repose.

Birds will wake again to-morrow, and the young lark  
    in the cloud,  
From a heart with joy o'erflowing, will pour forth his  
    lays aloud ;

But, oh ! higher than earth's minstrel, I shall join the  
joyful hymn  
In those fadeless realms of glory shades of death can  
never dim.

Mother, many a time at midnight in the distant skies  
afar  
I have seen seraphic glances, beaming from each  
golden star ;  
While the Moon was brightly shining like a queen  
enthroned above,  
'Midst the stars, which seem'd like angels moving  
round the throne of Love.

Far adown the path of moonbeams, from the clouds  
so silver white,  
Comes the sound of happy voices, singing praises in  
delight. . . .  
Listen ! for I now hear voices—shall I tell you what  
they say ?  
Oh ! they call, they call unto me, 'Sister spirit, come  
away !'

So, my mother, I am going, going to that countless  
throng,  
And to join with those sweet voices in a never-  
ceasing song.  
Do not weep, for I am going to a world of rest and  
bliss—  
Farewell, mother ! let me, dying, feel thy warm and  
loving kiss.

CELESTA.

PALE Beauty of the sunny lands,  
Thy form as in my early dreams  
    Again I see :  
Still with thy prayer-clasp'd lily hands ;  
Still in thine eyes the sacred beams  
    Of Love's pure light, for me.

That face, which in the joyous Spring  
(Ere young affection's first eclipse)  
    Bade Sin depart ;  
When, like a touch of angel-wing,  
A kiss fell on my thirsting lips,  
    And heaven upon my heart !

Thou wert to me a star of light ;  
A star of God, made pure and bright,  
    Thou shinest now.  
I feel thy presence in the night,  
The angel-halo grandly bright  
    Upon thy seraph brow !

As in a dream of holy things  
In consecrated aisle,  
    Far Earth above  
Thou lift'st my soul on radiant wings ;  
For, in the memory of thy smile,  
    With death I feel in love !

OVER THE RIVER.

PARTED for ever ! Oh, dread thought of sorrow !  
When the dark shadow falls over the heart,  
Breathe it not ; but remember the joy of the morrow,  
That dawns when the season of Death shall depart.  
Listen again to the voice of Creation ;  
Bend o'er the grave with no questioning sigh,  
For in this thought there is sweet consolation—  
Under the dead leaves the violets lie.  
Parted for ever ! Parted for ever !  
No ; soon again vanish'd forms we shall see :  
Over the river, over the river,  
Angels are watching and waiting for thee.

Though the wild wind may be Winter foretelling,  
Stirring sad memories shrined in the breast ;  
Though it may cause the grief-wave to be swelling,  
Rocking as on the trees now the lone nest ;  
Yet our love-birds we again shall recover ;  
Spring, with new light in her eyes, will restore  
Even the myrtle-flowers we have wept over—  
Nothing is lost to the heart evermore.  
Parted for ever ! Parted for ever !  
No ; vanish'd faces again we shall see :  
Over the river, over the river,  
Angels are watching and waiting for thee.

MOURNING.

It does not seem a year ago our Darling pass'd away;  
The grief remains so fresh within, it seems but yesterday;  
And the words like heartless mockery sound—"Tis  
now so long ago,  
That it is time to put aside the outward signs of woe.'

Alas! what folly is the thought! Can Earth in winter  
drear  
Put on a robe of radiant light, beside the old year's  
bier?  
Oh, no! it wears no tinted robes, till, starting from  
the tomb,  
Type of the resurrection morn, Spring wears a crown  
of bloom.

Nor would I change these signs of woe till Death be  
pass'd away,  
Till o'er the darkness of the heart shall dawn the  
brighter day;  
And then, when tears will never drop upon a fallen  
leaf,  
For spotless robes of righteousness I'd change this  
garb of grief.

I cannot put this mourning off, poor emblem though  
it be  
Of sorrow far too deep for tears or human sympathy,  
E'en though a year be pass'd since I beheld the loved  
depart ;  
For who can put the mourning off that clings about  
the heart ?



### THE DAYS OF THE ROSES.

THE days of the roses are over ;  
The growth of the year complete,  
Cut by the frost in a single night,  
Lies dead with its flowers at our feet.  
The fountain still flows, but its music  
Has lost all its magical powers ;  
And silent and still is the greenwood—  
The birds sing no more to the flowers.

But dear is the thought—when bleak Winter  
Is past with its shadows of gloom,  
The flowers will revive in the valleys,  
And rise from their snow-cover'd tomb :  
So it cheereth our hearts when we sorrow,  
And mourn for the loved gone before,  
To hope in the glorious morrow  
When roses can wither no more.



## WORDS FOR WORKERS.

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*' Let us choose wisely, while we have the power,  
A treasure with which nevermore to part—  
A fadeless blossom; for the untrue flower  
Will change to dust and ashes in the heart.  
He that mistakes the pearl on ocean-shore,  
Vainly returns when years have pass'd away;  
For wave-borne from his hand for evermore  
Is that which at his feet once waiting lay.  
The pure star shines but once on every life:  
God help us when it rises in our view,  
That, standing steadfast-soul'd amid the strife,  
We, seeing many lights, may choose the true.'*

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## COMMON DUTIES.

**W**HEN questioning which way to walk,  
Where I a sign of Heaven might find,  
Above the waste of human talk  
A pleasant thought stole o'er my mind.

Least likely they to see the face  
Of Truth, who dream, with selfish thought,  
For them a miracle of grace  
By God or angels must be wrought.



'Tis not required we far should roam,  
Or some herculean labour do :  
Heaven is most likely nearest home,  
If we have eyes its lights to view.

A pilgrimage it does not need  
To some far-distant shrine, to prove,  
With weary heart and feet that bleed,  
The presence of Divinest love.

This is my faith—whatever sphere,  
However humble be our place,  
Doing our duty we shall hear  
Soonest the voice of saving grace.

And they who sit with folded hands,  
Or give up life to idle dreams  
Like searchers in far distant lands,  
Shall never find Love's purest streams.

Not unto Bethlehem's sleeping street  
The Saviour's birth was first reveal'd ;  
Not there first rang the tidings sweet,  
But to the shepherds in the field,—

The shepherds, who kept watch by night ;  
For had they then been slumbering,  
They would have lost the heavenly sight,  
Nor heard the choir of angels sing.

The first disciples of our Lord,  
Mending their nets in Galilee,  
Heard then the blest Redeemer's word—  
The gracious mandate, 'Follow Me!'

Though we may walk the crowded street,  
If duty there our errand show,  
God's angels will most likely meet  
Us half-way as we come and go.

Even whilst sitting at receipt  
Of custom, Christ's love-glance was given  
To the Evangelist, whose feet  
Were straightway turn'd to Him and Heaven.

It is for all men truth most clear,  
That spot for us is hallow'd ground  
Where we can fill the useful sphere,  
In common duties faithful found.

And thus man's work may grow sublime :  
The simple task through which we plod  
A ladder be, by which to climb  
Into the fairer home of God.



## THE TRUMPET-CALL.

In Life's mighty field of battle,  
Will ye stand like soulless cattle  
Deaf to voice of Love or Fame?  
Weak, when foes of Right assailing;  
Blaming others for the failing  
Which may steep a life in shame?

Faith and courage make men heroes;  
Coward souls crown phantom Neros  
Tyrants of their hearts and brains,  
And ignobly round them kneeling,  
Dead to every lofty feeling,  
Link by link forge their own chains.

Wilt thou Independence barter?  
Wilt thou forfeit Freedom's charter  
By a word or work untrue?  
Brother, make thy life a story,  
Every page illumed with glory:  
Strong to dare, be great to do!

Let the fire of Love be lighted;  
Let the oppress'd, the wrong'd, be righted;  
Let us hurl Injustice down.  
In the cause of Truth enlisting,  
Let us, every wrong resisting,  
Bear the Cross and win the Crown!

NOTHING TO DO.

NOTHING to do? Oh, away with such blindness!  
Hearts and hands willing need never be still:  
God has a glorious mission assign'd us;  
Plenty of work we may find if we will.  
Away, oh, away with the indolent feeling  
Prompting the thought, there is nothing to do!  
Angels and men to our souls are appealing—  
'Work, work in earnest; be patient, be true!'

Nothing to do? Think you God, who created  
The winds and the waters, the birds and the flowers—  
Think, think you that He, who their missions dictated,  
Endow'd man in vain with his marvellous powers?  
No, no, in the roll and the rush of the river,  
The bloom of the flower, and the song of the bird,  
The voice of Omnipotence echoeth ever,  
And 'labour and love' the commands that are heard.

Nothing to do? Oh, what sinful delusion!  
Hear ye the din in the populous streets?  
Hark with what pain, amidst Life's strange confusion,  
The dark troubled breast of humanity beats!  
Thousands of weary ones need consolation;  
Souls of the hungry are crying for bread;  
Thousands fall heedlessly into temptation;  
Thousands are homeless and scantily fed.

Nothing to do? Are no strong ones oppressing  
The weak and the helpless, the strangers to love?  
Is there no life ye can cheer with a blessing?  
No grief of the heart ye can help to remove?  
Oh, then, away with the indolent feeling  
That prompts you to say you have nothing to do!  
Angels and men to your souls are appealing—  
‘Work, work in earnest; be patient, be true!’



### OPPORTUNITIES.

Two seeds by the same wind blown from the same  
perfect flower,—  
One to a sterile bank, one to a shelter'd bower :—  
One to perfection grew, the gardener's joy and pride;  
One just gave signs of birth, wither'd and died.  
Blame not the bloom that found no favour'd place;  
For see, how little avail'd its vaunted pride of race!  
To judge what a man has done, or in what fail'd his  
power,  
Consider wisely and well the soil that nursed the  
flower.

Heaven be praised, wasted efforts, like work efficiently  
done,  
Are known and perceived by the Wise, the All-seeing  
One.

The grandest achievements of life, or the meanest  
works of men,  
Will be weigh'd in an unerring scale, ere He will  
condemn.  
Two mites from the Widow's hand were more in the  
Saviour's eyes  
Than the Pharisee's richest gifts which cost no sacrifice.  
Man, in his folly, seeks gold in a quarry of stone :  
But God, unto whom the secrets of all hearts are  
known,  
Will judge by what we have striven to do, as much as  
by what we have done.



## A MAN.

I LOVE to see a man, whose deeds  
Do not the title shame,  
Whose lips despise not common sense,  
And on whose brow Intelligence  
Inscribes her glorious name.

With eyes that flash, indignantly  
Disdaining flattery's dower ;  
With form erect, life's blasts to brave ;  
Too proud to yield himself a slave  
To passion's baneful power.

A mind with useful knowledge stored,  
In truth and virtue strong ;  
With smiles of love upon his cheek,  
And lips that know not how to speak  
A falsehood or a wrong.

A soul that feels its destiny  
Is not alone for earth ;  
That counts not birth or ancestry,  
But patents its nobility  
By deeds of highest worth.

No cringing suppliant for gain  
Beneath a tyrant's rod ;  
But with an independent heart,  
Resolved to nobly act the part  
Assign'd to him by God.

This is the man I love to see,  
Deserving honour, fame ;  
The heir of immortality,  
Who elevates humanity,  
And dignifies its name.



## LOWLY BLESSINGS.

THE simplest things oft bring us nearest God :  
A breath of prayer, a sound of matin-bell,  
Some wayside flow'ret raising from the sod  
Its Heaven-invested beauty, loved so well—  
Even as wee and meek a thing as thou,  
O first fair violet of the early year,  
That taken to my heart dost herald now  
The future joy of summer drawing near.

The bird whose nest is built upon the ground  
Sweetens his path to Heaven with rapturous song,  
Scaling the mountain-clouds with beauty crown'd,  
And raises thought from Earth's ignoble throng  
To sanctuaries on high ; and what delight  
Steals o'er my being—rapture pure and true—  
When I behold, reflecting Morn's first light,  
The iris splendours of a drop of dew !

A breath of wind, beneath whose gentle kiss  
The lake breaks into ripples, this can wake  
Joy in the heart, and purer spirit-bliss  
Than aught the mind from sordid dreams can take.  
And when last night, O tender-hearted wife !  
Beside our darling's bed we knelt prayer-bound,  
When looking on that wondrous thing of life,  
Did we not feel the spot was hallow'd ground ?



Beneath our gaze, that little glorious face  
Smiled, as if, closed to earth, her eyes could see  
The Guardian Angels moving round the place,  
The angels then so near to you and me.  
Truly we further seem'd from Earth than Heaven ;  
We were so near the beautiful and good,  
That then I felt what holy joy is given  
To common blessings little understood.



### STONES IN THE ROAD.

ONE day upon a heap of stones  
A grey-hair'd man was sitting :  
With heavy strokes the hammer fell,  
The lumps of granite splitting.  
'Old man,' said I, 'your task seems hard ;'  
But not to me attending,  
'Old man,' said I, 'tis strange this road  
So frequently wants mending.'  
Then did the old man raise his head,  
And, with good-humour'd laughter,  
Said, 'Sir, 'twere well if all bad ways,  
Like this, were well look'd after.

' But come, if you are not too proud  
To learn from humble teachers,  
I'll tell you now what I have learnt  
From these dumb little preachers.  
I know folks, passing every day,  
Will curse the stones I'm breaking ;  
And some curse me because they feel  
A momentary shaking.  
But 'tis unjust : they do not think  
Of good that is to follow ;  
That were the road not rough to-day,  
'Twould not be smooth to-morrow.

' But though they waste their breath and time  
In vain and foolish clamour,  
These stones have given me thoughts as bright  
As sparks from flint and hammer ;  
For they have taught me, when I'm sad,  
And bow'd with care and trouble,  
To feel such stones upon the road  
Will future pleasures double.  
And hardest flints the best roads make ;  
So sorrows the severest  
Will often bring the mourning heart  
To Heaven and God the nearest.

' You'll find, whilst journeying through Life,  
The roads that are neglected  
Will soon become most evil ways,  
By every plague infected.

Deep ruts and stagnant pools of vice,  
Springs of affection breaking,  
Would ruin all that from the Earth  
To Heaven is worth the taking ;  
And Pride, Hypocrisy, and Hate  
Would pass for sterling metals ;  
Whilst all the road of Life would be  
Choked up with stinging-nettles.

‘ So let us not repine or fret,  
Life’s roughest ways ascending :  
He knoweth best who loveth best,  
Our needful wants attending.  
The stones God scatters in our path  
Should never make us stumble,  
But cause us patiently to grow  
More Christ-like and more humble.  
Such stones upon the road of Life,  
Though fraught with present sorrow,  
Only to-day make rough the way  
Which shall be smooth to-morrow.’



## GUARDIAN ANGELS.

We know, though all unseen, around us move  
Ministering spirits, watching with devotion,  
Strengthening weak hands and weary feet, with love,  
And lulling storms that vex Life's troubled ocean.

Finer than air, we cannot see the beauty  
Of their immortal forms and faces near ;  
Yet, if we faithful tread the path of duty,  
Our souls their sweet approving voices hear.

Their glorious footprints we but feebly trace ;  
Yet we may meet them in the crowded street,  
And feel, when answering some imploring face,  
Their radiant wings against our heart-strings beat.

Through many a darken'd house their light has shone,  
For 'some have entertain'd them unawares' ;  
Unconscious, whilst bewailing loved ones gone,  
What viewless forms re-fill'd the vacant chairs.

And, oh ! 'tis past our poor imagination  
To know how oft they've saved us from a fall  
Into some sinful act or dark temptation ;  
But when we meet in Heaven, we shall know all !

## WORTH WHILE.

It may not seem to be 'worth while'  
To strive to win a brother's smile :  
Busy in search of something new,  
Or striving some great work to do,  
We often slight the things that ought  
To be our first, our earnest thought.

Ofttimes we think 'tis not 'worth while'  
Our spotless garments to defile  
Amongst the haunts of sin and shame,  
Where but the murmur of a name  
Might make some erring child of sin  
A life of hope and love begin.

How oft it seems not worth our while  
A brother's sadness to beguile :  
Wrapt in the thought of self alone,  
Our hearts, insensible as stone,  
Thus lose the chance of winning love  
From men on earth or God above.

Worth while? oh, think! to-day perchance  
Heaven hath ordain'd some circumstance  
To lead us, howsoever weak,  
An act to do, or word to speak,  
That shall a joy and blessing be  
To us through all Eternity.

Worth while? think of the Father's care,  
Who listens to the feeblest prayer ;  
With power so vast, yet love profound,  
A sparrow falls not to the ground  
Unmark'd by His all-seeing eye,  
Who deigns to bless our destiny.

He might have thought it was not worth  
His while to bless with flowers the Earth ;  
He might have made the world without  
Its countless beauties strewn about ;  
The fields, the birds, the sun-lit seas,  
He might have made it without these.

But He, who did not e'en forget  
The perfume for the violet,  
By bird and flower, by wave and wind,  
Rebukes the vain and selfish mind  
That deems the effort not worth while,  
Which wakes a hope or wins a smile.



#### LITTLE KINDNESSES.

THE little drops of dew  
Give life to fainting flowers ;  
Little moments, beating true,  
Make up this life of ours.

From the tiny acorn springs  
Proudest of majestic trees ;  
And from little fluttering wings  
Fall the sweetest melodies.

And as little golden seeds  
Glorious harvests may impart,  
So will little kindly deeds  
Make a heaven of the heart.

Dost thou sometimes doubt thy strength ?  
Dost thou weak and trembling feel ?  
See the trickling stream at length  
Lightly turns the giant wheel.

See the beauteous coral isle,  
Mark those grottoes of the wave ;  
They should make thee wear a smile,  
And thy heart grow bold and brave.

For as daisies from the sod  
To the winter-weary heart,  
So the weakest child of God  
May some thrill of joy impart.



## ROBERT WRAY.

OLD Robert Wray, the village sage—  
For many a year his patient face,  
And gray locks silver'd o'er by age,  
Were as familiar to the place  
As the old yews that o'er the Dead  
Their sacred, sombre shadows spread.

I loved to listen to his talk  
Of vanish'd days and scenes of old ;  
To join him in his morning walk,  
And hear his simple stories told ;  
For well I knew he lived at last  
Less in the Present than the Past.

Within his memory, three squires  
Had lived lives of indulgent ease  
In yon brick mansion, with the spires  
Just peering through yon branching trees.  
The Rectory, too, had twice changed hands,  
With pleasant glebe and garden lands.

The churchyard, round the house of prayer,  
For years his favorite walk became,  
Because more friends he number'd there  
Than he in village street could name ;  
And from their graves, as Spring flowers start,  
Sprang thoughts dear to the old man's heart.



Now, as he leant upon his staff  
Pondering, he seem'd not there alone ;  
For he could fill the epitaph  
Half-perish'd from the crumbling stone,  
That but recorded death and birth  
Of those return'd to mother Earth.

It was the happy Sabbath morn ;  
The three bells from the ivied tower  
Sent out across the waving corn  
Their pleasant chimes ; 'twas such an hour,  
That, in the quiet house of prayer,  
We feel 'tis good to worship there.

Of all the simple village folk,  
Scarce one pass'd Robert on his way,  
Parson or squire, but each one spoke  
A kindly word. Now, on this day  
A seeming stranger to the place  
Welcomed the old man's cheerful face.

'Old Robert !' he exclaim'd, 'ah, well !  
I am rejoiced again to see  
One friend, as when I used to dwell  
In yon old homestead dear to me.'  
And here towards the farm close by  
He pointed with tear-moisten'd eye.

'Yes,' said old Robert, 'many a friend  
That once I loved is "gone before ;"

But vanish'd features seem to blend  
With living faces at this door;  
Through the church-porch they come and go,  
And that is why I love it so.

'So, let me welcome you, although  
I fail your form to recognise;  
And yet your voice I seem to know—  
But age has dimm'd my sense and eyes.'—  
'You recollect,' the stranger said,  
'The name of Richard Hollingshed?'

'Right well do I, his dying glance  
Still haunts my memory—the grief  
That settled o'er his countenance:  
'Twas sad to see him, like a leaf  
Swept by a sudden gust away  
Before the season of decay.

'It was not that he fear'd to die;  
For life he breathed no coward prayer;  
But in his ear the feeble cry  
Of those dependent on his care  
Smote his brave heart, and fill'd his eye  
With tear of speechless agony.

'“My boy, how can I leave my boy?”  
That was the trouble of his mind;  
Nothing avail'd the hope of joy,  
Conscious his boy was left behind.

Ah ! can it be I see the son  
So dear to that poor suffering one ?

‘ Right welcome, welcome back again,  
Back to the old familiar place !  
Though you, alas ! will search in vain  
For many a dear remember’d face.  
But there are some among us yet  
Who do not you and yours forget ;—

‘ Who, though for many a year you’ve been  
A wanderer in distant climes,  
Have often long’d of you to hear,  
And named your name in prayer sometimes.  
But if all that is said be true,  
Heaven has indeed been kind to you.

‘ We hear in London you have got  
A finer house than even the squire,  
And that for grandeur there is not  
A place like yours in all the shire ;  
And once a message here was sent  
That you were going to Parliament.

‘ We all were glad such news to hear ;  
I only wish that it had come,  
Mother’s and father’s heart to cheer,  
Before they left their earthly home.  
But doubtless on Heaven’s happy shore  
The tidings reached them long before.

‘But, be that even as it may,  
I’m glad with you to have a word ;  
To hear from your own lips to-day  
If all be true that we have heard ;  
And you feel conscious God can bless  
The ways and means of your success.’

The young man spoke with conscious pride  
(A grateful tear stole down his cheek) —  
‘Old friend, it cannot be denied  
The blessings all of which you speak  
Are mine ; yea, Life’s abundant fare —  
Of riches, too, enough to spare.’

‘Not that, not that !’ old Robert said :  
‘Riches and honours thick may fall  
On many a vain and worthless head,  
Nor get men *on* in life at all,  
But rather draw them farther back  
From the true, good, and shining track.

‘Do you forget, long years ago  
You in our school were taught to pray ?  
A mother led you, too, to know  
And early choose the better way.  
Than when a school-boy, scarcely seven,  
Say, feel you any nearer Heaven ?

‘’Tis easier far in worldly sense  
To so get on, that men’s gross sight

May envy your intelligence ;  
But draw you nearer to the light ;  
And, by these graves of dear ones gone,  
Say, are you truly getting on ?

‘ Things that may make men prosperous feel,  
And lull their souls with false content,  
Some dark temptations may conceal,  
And all true progress circumvent :  
The fairest thing is dearly bought  
For which we barter God-given thought.

‘ I mean by “ getting on ” in life —  
The certain consciousness, each hour,  
Of rising above petty strife  
For gain of gold or human power ;  
With eyes each day less blind to view  
The pure, the beautiful, the true.’

Scarce had these words old Robert said,  
When on his ear there fell the sound  
Of organ music ; so he led  
Young Richard from the hallow’d ground ;  
The old man totter’d up the aisle,  
God’s sunbeam on his head the while.

Though Richard strove to worship there,  
He could not roving thoughts restrain ;  
For through response to hymn and prayer  
These words still haunted heart and brain —

*'Riches and honours thick may fall,  
Without men getting on at all !'*

Before the harvest-fields were clear'd,  
And, ere the reaper's work was done,  
That year, a new-made mound appear'd,  
Wept o'er by many a sorrowing one.  
Beneath the yew-tree's quiet shade  
The grave of Robert Wray was made.

But often to that place of rest  
Richard would come, and there recall  
Words, which to him by Heaven were blest,  
The simple words of truth withal :  
'Riches and honours thick may fall,  
Without men "getting on" at all !'

And so he caused above that mound  
Should be set up a simple stone,  
And this inscription may be found,  
By moss and lichen overgrown—  
'Strangers who gaze this grave upon,  
In God's light are you getting on?'



## PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY.

For the high-born and the low,  
There's a joy that all may know,  
A source of bliss that never fails to bless :  
Though simple it may seem,  
It is no idle dream,  
This sure and certain secret of success.  
It is, to act Life's part  
With purity of heart ;  
Unsullied, when temptations rise in view ;  
With firm unyielding will,  
The duties to fulfil  
Our Father has ordain'd for us to do.

No matter what our lot,  
In castle or in cot  
There's work for every willing heart and hand.  
There's evil to subdue,  
Exertion to renew,  
And knowledge that we all should understand :  
Disdaining to despond,  
But ready to respond  
To duty's call, and cheerfully obey ;  
With firm resolve to win  
When combating with sin,  
And climb the mounts that bar our heavenward way.

If blessings make us glad,  
Oh, let us to the sad  
Impart, with acts of kindness, words of joy ;  
Determined every ill  
To crush with earnest will,  
The weeds that mar Life's garlands to destroy ;  
To scorn a cruel deed,  
But strive the van to lead,  
And do a worthy action when we can ;  
To comfort the distress'd,  
And, helping the oppress'd,  
To dignify the soul and name of man.

With faithful heart and mind,  
To Heaven's decrees resign'd,  
With simple faith our panoply of might,  
So working win our way,  
That we may know each day  
Our souls are drawing nearer perfect light—  
The Dawn when we shall hear,  
In accents sweet and clear,  
The gracious voice inviting us to share  
The everlasting rest  
Remaining for the Blest—  
The home the Lord hath promised to prepare.





## MONEY OR LOVE?

WHEN life is compared to a difficult game,  
The simile well may be made ;  
For power, position, wealth, honour, and fame,  
Are prizes for which it is play'd.  
We all of us stand in the list, and we all  
For good or for evil compete.  
Half success is defeat ; we must conquer or fall—  
We must either proceed or retreat.  
In tournaments of old, the brave conqueror then  
Won his spurs 'neath the smiles of the fair ;  
But now the spectators are angels and men,  
And God gives the crown he shall wear.  
Then come, if in earnest the game ye begin,  
Declare, ere ye throw down the glove,  
The guerdon your heart has determined to win :  
Will ye play now for money or love ?

For the first ye must delve in the dust of the earth ;  
But all, all whom mammon controls  
Shall live where there is of affection a dearth,  
And sacrifice bodies and souls.  
If won, it may lead one to think himself great,  
For the fool it appears to make wise,  
Who with it may purchase proud homes or-estate,  
And obsequies grand when he dies.

But though o'er the gold of an over-fill'd purse  
His eyes gleam with miser delight,  
Over all without love, like a cloud, glooms the curse  
Making life a perpetual night.

Then come, if in earnest the game ye begin,  
Declare, ere ye throw down the glove,  
The guerdon your heart has determined to win :  
Will ye play now for money or love ?

O Love, we behold thee with glory bedight ;  
Thou alone canst true riches impart ;  
We know that thou mak'st, with a smile of delight,  
A garden of God of the heart ;  
That in the foot-prints of thy beautiful feet  
The lilies of purity spring ;  
And thy musical voice, ever holy and sweet,  
Seems tidings of Heaven to bring.  
We know, O thou glorious Spirit of Love,  
Thou art light in a valley of gloom ;  
That thou ledest us on to the bright home above,  
Whilst sprinkling with sweet flowers the tomb.  
Then come, if in earnest the game ye begin,  
Declare, ere ye throw down the glove,  
The guerdon your heart has determined to win :  
Will ye play now for money or love ?



## KING ALCOHOL.

THERE'S a demon forth ! there's a demon forth !  
He roameth a conqueror free ;  
He is loosed from the realms of dark Despair,  
And a maniac's laugh laughs he.  
I see him go forth in the dark, dark night ;  
With a flashing, frenzied eye,  
He mocks with a fiend's impure delight  
The GOD of the Heavens on high !  
He goeth forth with a treacherous smile,  
And his blood-stain'd banner we see ;  
His hands the fairest scenes defile ;  
But followers many has he.

I have seen him betroth the fairest Bride ;  
And fresh from his bridal prayer,  
I have mark'd how he paled her roseate cheek,  
And furrow'd her brow with care.  
He enters the doors of the happiest homes ;  
But the children flee in dismay,  
And the young wife weeps a burning tear,  
Which in vain she wipes away.  
At the joy and peace of innocent hearts  
Are his bolts of fury hurl'd ;  
And he prides himself on his fiendish darts,  
The curse of a sinful world.

There's a demon forth ! there's a demon forth !  
He comes with a tempting wile,  
With a witching look, and a cursèd touch,  
And a false, perfidious smile.  
From his lips breaks forth a shower of oaths,  
Distill'd from the dissolute bowl ;  
And the curse of God is on his brow,  
And a leprosy clings to his soul.  
Beware, beware of this demon form,  
And his foul polluted band !  
For misery, want, and vile disgrace  
Are link'd with him hand in hand.

There's a demon forth ! there's a demon forth !  
Sound loud the alarum bell—  
Raise the hue and cry ; let the tempter die ;  
Toll over his grave a knell !  
For when from the hearts and homes of men  
This spirit of dread is driven,  
Such pæans shall go to the heart of God  
As never yet went to Heaven.  
Children will smile with childhood's smile,  
Strong will become the weak,  
And the bloom of Life will return again  
To many a wither'd cheek.



## THE RAGGED DRESS.

I OFTEN think of Amy Gray and the day we chanced  
to meet—

A little girl scarce seven years old, in the throng of a  
London street.

Her face shone out 'midst the passing crowd, as out  
of the dark a star,

For scarce was one save her own in the street which  
bore no blemishing scar,—

Dinted by time or by sorrow, or wearing of care the  
trace ;

So wonder not that I loved so well this bright young  
sunny face.

Her eyes were blue as speed-well flowers that grow in  
a country lane,

And her voice as blithe as a joyous bird's that knows  
no thought of pain.

Her little fragile form was draped in dress so white  
and neat,

It seem'd more fit for a daisy-floor than the dust of a  
London street :

Many a day she pass'd me by, and the stranger-child  
grew dear,

And her glad 'Good morning!' went to my heart like  
a snatch of song to the ear.

At length, a year pass'd ere we met. Far from that  
crowded place,  
Ofttimes came back the memory of Amy's haunting  
face ;  
So when to town I came again, I sought the well-  
known street,  
Trusting, as in old pleasant times, the same sweet  
smile to greet.

The child was there, but not the child I had been wont  
to see,  
For o'er her life, alas ! had swept the surge of misery :  
Her dress was torn and tatter'd, her flossy hair flew  
wild ;  
It seem'd her guardian angel had vanish'd from the  
child.

Her face was very pale, and from her eyes, like drops  
of dew,  
The tears brimm'd o'er the speed-well flowers—Spring  
flowers had lost their hue.  
With straining eyes she upwards gazed, as there  
some light were given,  
And with a sorrowing voice she sobb'd, 'Oh that I were  
in Heaven !'

'Poor child,' I said, 'why dost thou weep? what  
sorrow hast thou known?  
Why art thou in this heartless street neglected and  
alone ?

What means the change o'er cheek and lip, and why  
those sobs and tears?

What hand would dare to tear from thee the joys of  
infant years?

'Ah, me!' she said, 'I've lost the heart that was so  
dear to me,

For in our earthly home no more shall I our mother  
see;

They took her through this busy street, and no one  
seem'd to care,

And they laid her in the churchyard where the ground  
is damp and bare.

'But yesterday, when in the school our lessons had  
been given,

The clergyman spoke gentle words of loving ones in  
Heaven ;

And though above dear mother's grave not even grass  
will grow,

He told us of a land of flowers where founts eternal  
flow.

'He said our Heavenly Father reign'd o'er all that  
region bright,

And that the angels dwelling there were clothed in  
raiment white.

But never since dear mother died has father seem'd  
to care

For the ruin of our little home and the rags that now  
I wear.

'I think that he has lost his love in yonder wretched  
place ;'  
And here towards a house close by she look'd with  
troubled face ;  
'Twas one of those cursed hells of earth, that we so  
often meet  
'Midst the flaring lamps of London, at many a corner  
street.

'And have you no one left on earth who loves you  
more than this ?'  
The child sobb'd, 'No one, since I felt dear mother's  
dying kiss ;  
And, oh ! to love my home as once I've tried, but  
vainly striven,  
And life grows every day more dark—oh, would I  
were in Heaven !'

Not many morrows after this, God granted her request ;  
He sent His angel Death to take her spirit to the  
blest ;  
And the little tatter'd dress was changed for a little  
snow-white shroud,  
And her father o'er a little grave in speechless sorrow  
bow'd.

And when he turn'd towards his home, remorse his  
bosom guest,  
Whilst utter desolation reign'd within love's empty  
nest,



As he beheld 'a little dress' he sobb'd with grief  
intense,  
Remembering all the wrongs he'd wrought to injured  
innocence.

That night he slept, but troubled dreams still haunted  
heart and brain,  
And often he awoke with cry of agonizing pain ;  
Pursued as by avenging Fate, his spirit found no  
calm,  
For even Sleep to guilty souls refuseth restful  
balm.

And, toss'd upon his pillow like some bark by wind  
and wave,  
At last a dream seem'd leading him towards a little  
grave ;  
And then he clasp'd his hands in sleep, and cried in  
accents wild,  
'God, if Thou ever hearest prayer, give, give me  
back my child !'

God heard the prayer, and in his dream the angel-  
child came down,  
Clothed like the radiant ones who wear Heaven's  
amaranthine crown ;  
She said, 'O father, never more may I return to  
thee,  
But thou mayst come, the Saviour says, to mother  
and to me.'

That morn he woke with broken heart, and bitterly he  
wept ;  
Still heard he his child-angel's voice, as when in dreams  
he slept ;  
And He who blest the Magdalene, gave him, who  
knelt to pray,  
That Peace the world can never give, and never take  
away.



#### OURSELVES.

NAY, be not discouraged ; why should you repine  
Because you your destiny cannot divine ?  
There's One who discerns every secret desire—  
Who knows to what heights of delight you aspire ;  
And be sure all He doeth is done for the best :  
Let contentment then brood like a dove in your breast ;  
For often we grumble with Fortune and Fate,  
When half of our sorrows ourselves we create.

In vain we may sigh some dear object to gain,  
If we use not the means the desire to obtain ;  
For there's truth in the fable, and well 'tis, I feel,  
To trust what old Hercules says of the wheel.  
The pearls may lie deep 'neath the ocean's dark wave.  
But the jewel is only secured by the brave ;  
And victors in life's mighty battle are still  
Perseverance, with Truth and a resolute Will.

Oh ! those who preach doctrines of faith without works,  
In their hearts I'm suspicious that indolence lurks ;  
And to drones in the hive I'm a pitiless foe,  
For why should they reap who help never to sow ?  
As for ill-luck, believe me, Exertion and Will  
Are giants of prowess, of conquering skill ;  
And the heart that's in earnest no bars can impede—  
Its certain prerogative is to succeed.

N-er think of the faint-hearted coward's word, 'fail,'  
Nor at Fortune, or Fate, or Society rail ;  
But your heart and your actions with faithfulness read,  
And, believe me, you'll find why you do not succeed.  
Wait not, then, a moment, but strike to the root  
Of the evil, and start on some noble pursuit ;  
And be not unjust in your murmurs at fate,  
If half of your sorrows yourself you create.



### THE FREE.

I HEARD a song of Liberty  
The echoes' of the hill awake ;  
The song, with wild exultant glee,  
Seem'd from a nation's heart to break ;  
It roll'd with peans of acclaim—  
'Ours is the country of the Free !

The weakest in our isle may claim  
 The birthright boon of Liberty !'  
 Such spirit-stirring words as these  
 Were wafted by the midnight breeze.

Then follow'd silence long and deep ;  
 The pitying stars look'd from the sky  
 Upon the sons of toil asleep ;  
 But we communed, my soul and I ;  
 And then a still, small voice I heard,  
 Which o'er my spirit music shed.  
 The Voice my inmost being stirr'd,  
 For this my guardian-angel said :  
 'To-morrow come, and thou shalt see  
 The Man-thought and the God-known Free.'

I slept until the dawn of day ;  
 Then rose, and on the mountain stood,  
 As by an angel led away,  
 To see the human multitude  
 Thronging the city's arteries,  
 Filling its heart with busy life.  
 I heard the mingled sounds arise  
 Of joy and hope, of hate and strife ;  
 Then came the angel's voice to me,  
 'This day thou shalt behold the Free !'

With eyes fix'd on the city's street,  
 I follow'd one whom I had heard  
 Louder than all that song repeat  
 Whose refrain bore the mystic word.

He stood within the crowded mart,  
A maelstrom in life's troubled sea—  
Where was the empire of the heart?  
Where shone the day-star, Liberty?  
Where was the high, the lofty soul  
That scorn'd a grovelling world's control?

What saw I in his eager eyes,  
Upraised with supplicating glance,  
But dreams of El Dorado rise?  
And what in each wan countenance  
Of those who, blind to ways of love,  
Were petrified by Mammon's spell,  
And, turning from the Light above,  
Around a golden image fell?  
And yet these hearts, which cringe and crave,  
Repudiate the name of Slave!

Another form then pass'd him by;  
I follow'd, and beheld his shrine;  
I mark'd his wild and blood-shot eye—  
He was a votary to Wine!  
A burning thirst his soul consumed;  
A phantom hand had seized his heart;  
And, by relentless Habit doom'd,  
Who could his chains of terror start?  
Yet still his Slavery he denied,  
And boasting of his Freedom died.

And watching still Life's bounding stream,  
Another countless host I saw

Surround their King, who reigns supreme,  
Whose will decreed relentless law.  
Poor slaves at Fashion's chariot-wheel,  
Adopting follies for their creeds,  
They knelt, and still abjectly kneel,  
Incapable of glorious deeds;  
And yet the fool of Fashion raves,  
'No, Britons never shall be slaves!'

I sicken'd at the empty sound,  
And, turning then toward the sea,  
I cried in agony, aloud,  
'Alas! O Earth, where are thy Free?'  
But like the voice we hear in prayer,  
That comes from Heavenly lips we know,  
I heard the angel's accents clear  
Commanding me again to go:—  
'Thou'st seen the slaves, but now to thee  
I'll show the sons of Liberty.'

And then, amidst the human throng,  
I saw a form that stood erect,  
The fearless foe of pride and wrong,  
Unprejudiced by creed or sect.  
He stood the champion of the weak,  
Disdain'd the tyrant and his rod;  
Friend to the Right, he scorn'd to seek  
Strength from another than his God;  
And thus the spirit said to me,  
'Go, be thou likewise—such are Free!'

## OUR ISLE OF BEAUTY.

If e'er to prayer the gracious ear  
And heart of God attended,  
If ever blessing for a tear  
From lips of Love descended,  
My own, my native land, for thee,  
The King of kings addressing,  
My first, my soul's desire shall be,  
Heaven crown thy lot with blessing,  
Keeping thy children pure in love,  
And strong in truth and duty,  
That still our land all lands above  
Be hail'd the Isle of Beauty !

High as her hills of Freedom rise  
Above the unfathom'd ocean,  
So may the whole earth recognise  
Her Heaven-inspired devotion ;  
For God who built her water-walls,  
And laid their deep foundations,  
'Tis He who favour'd Britain calls,  
Exalted above nations.  
Her flag floats o'er heroic hearts,  
From which spring flowers of duty,  
Whose deathless fame that grace imparts  
Which crowns her Isle of Beauty.

Glance o'er her grand historic page—  
What glorious traditions,  
To stir the heart of youth or age  
With noblest of ambitions!  
Beholding how our fathers prized,  
Fought for, and won their charter,  
Dare we disgrace soil blood-baptized  
By hero and by martyr?  
No; deeds that make the Past sublime  
Nerve heart and hand in duty,  
That we may win the smile of Time,  
And bless our Isle of Beauty.

Ah! who can praise with feeble tongue  
A land so great in story,  
Where Milton and where Shakspeare sung,  
And legions died in glory;  
Whose scroll of fame bears deathless names  
Revered by every nation,  
Whose every breath of wind proclaims  
The slave's emancipation.  
They beckon us, those great ones gone,  
To tread the path of duty,  
That grander life and light may dawn  
Upon our Isle of Beauty.

In all the world what flowers are there  
Like Britain's virgin roses?  
What peaceful homes that can compare  
With those her land encloses?  
She breathes the breath of Liberty;  
Her happy sons and daughters



Are taught from childhood to be free,  
Free as her winds and waters.  
Her fame goes forth to realms afar,  
Inciting men to duty,  
And 'midst the waves set like a star  
Shines out our Isle of Beauty.

Far from our souls be lust of gold,  
Which petrifies affection;  
Ours be the grace true faith to hold,  
And follow Heaven's direction;  
So then our Parliament shall be  
Nobility of nature,  
Who bow to God alone the knee,  
Nor cringe to king or creature.  
Thus wiser laws shall bless the land,  
And teach the people duty,  
And peerless 'midst the great and grand  
Shall stand our Isle of Beauty.

Away, the base ignoble thought  
That deems her greatness flying,  
That all her mighty deeds are wrought  
Her fadeless laurels dying.  
No; let the winds of Heaven proclaim,  
And waft through Earth the story—  
Unsullied still is Britain's name,  
Eternal is her glory!  
Robed still with majesty and might,  
Inflexible in duty,  
The land of Earth's and Heaven's delight,  
Behold our Isle of Beauty!

## GENTLEMEN.

WHO is a Gentleman?

Was he the first who for the fray  
On Hastings' famous battle day  
Unfurld the Conqueror's banner—  
The strongest of the Norman horde  
That scourged the land with fire and sword?  
Had he prerogative to claim  
Power to dispense the honour'd name,  
The glorious title—Gentleman?

Were these invaders of the land,  
Who clutch'd from Harold's weaken'd hand  
The crown of royal Alfred,  
Earth's noblest aristocracy?  
Their patents of nobility  
Bear the usurping William's sign,  
As all that gives them right divine  
To the great name of Gentleman.

Who is a gentleman?

Is he who, with a haughty brow,  
Looks back upon that conquest now,  
Then o'er his gold and acres,  
And feels, without a thrill of shame,  
His title is an empty claim  
To long descent—whose very crest  
Betrays his lineage as in jest  
And mockery of such *Gentle*-man?

Is he who wars with honest men,  
And wields the sword or points the pen  
With selfish aims and motives ;  
Who dares to scorn a lofty thought,  
Or deed of valour nobly wrought,  
Nor thinks his acts, however base,  
Stain an escutcheon or disgrace  
The name and fame of Gentleman ?

Who is a Gentleman ?

Is he who stumbling-blocks would lay  
In Intellect's or Virtue's way,  
Frustrating lowly genius ;  
Who'd keep the ignorant his tools,  
And close our land's Heaven-favour'd schools  
To hoard the golden fruits of knowledge  
In some high-caste exclusive college—  
Is this, is this a Gentleman ?

Is he who weaves some fatal snare,  
And proudly takes the highest chair  
To patronize deception ;  
Whose lust a trusting heart would blight,  
Who'd rob even the widow's mite,  
Or, in his selfish pride, would vaunt  
His deafness to the cry of want—  
Is this, is this a Gentleman ?

Who is a Gentleman ?

Strip off the tinsel ; cast aside  
The filthy rags of human pride,  
That cover false distinctions ;

Away, ye fools of circumstance—  
Counterfeit nobles, made by chance !  
He that is born of Earth is earth :  
No accident of fate gives birth  
To God-created Gentlemen !

By feet that walk in ways of love,  
By natures that are far above  
All coats-of-arms and castles  
As Heaven from Earth's tear-water'd glens,  
Or angels' minds from common men's,  
By many a manly form and face,  
We recognize a noble race  
Worthy the name of Gentlemen !



# UP WITH THE LARK.

ONE morning awake, in the still daybreak,  
I saw the first sun rays beaming ;  
The hallow'd light woke thoughts of delight  
Far better than idle dreaming.  
And I saw from its nest, with throbbing breast,  
A bird to the blue sky soaring ;  
And it seem'd each note from its quivering throat  
Was the song of Love's outpouring.

But Conscience said, as I lay on my bed,  
‘Why wilt thou take no warning?  
What! seest thou not what joys are for thee  
When up with the lark in the morning?’

‘Why let the Sun’s best work be done  
In the fields ‘mong the fresh young flowers?  
What! seest thou not how precious may be  
The joys of these wasted hours?  
For as the Spring will fragrance bring,  
And tints to the roses fair,  
So strength to the weak and health to the cheek  
Are brought by the morning air.’  
This Conscience said, as I lay on my bed,  
‘Wherefore should God be adorning  
So early the Earth, if it is not worth  
The first love-thoughts of the morning?’

Then up with the Lark, if its song has stirr’d  
A single reproach in your bosom;  
Be up with the Sun, when its light hath begun,  
To bless the bird and the blossom:  
For whilst so simple a thing as a song  
Seems to make e’en the dewdrops gleam brighter,  
What! canst thou not bless some heart in distress,  
And make thine own burdens grow lighter?  
For happy thou’lt be, if with gratitude free,  
The habits of indolence scorning,  
Thy prayers shall arise to the glorious skies,  
Like the Lark to Heaven’s gate in the morning.

## CRICKETERS' SONG.

BENEATH the green boughs of the glad waving trees  
The cricketers gather'd to-day—  
Strong hearts, bold and free as the fetterless breeze,  
I heard their exulting shout, 'Play !'  
And as I beheld them all earnest to win  
A leaf from the chaplet of fame,  
Methought how much life from without and within  
Resembles the cricketers' game.

For in the great world we may see, day by day,  
Each man in the game takes his part ;  
And sounds that may well be interpreted — ' Play !'  
Are echoed from many a mart.  
Dame Fortune gives long splendid 'innings' to some,  
While others with patience must wait ;  
But let's all do our best, friends, whatever may come,  
And we shall win early or late.

Let's all take some side—true friend with his friend,  
Determined the wrong to oppose ;  
Let us 'block' every ball that the evil may send,  
And 'bowl out' the last of our foes !  
Let us always be known as the friends of 'Fair Play,'  
Though tempted by falsehood the more ;  
That when the game's over, we may, as to-day,  
Feel delight, not ashamed of the score !

May the 'balls' of Misfortune around us fly 'wide ;'  
And may men ne'er deride with a shout,

To find us the victims of error or pride,  
Amidst our temptations 'caught out' !  
But, with health-glowing cheek and with love-beaming  
eye,  
With hearts and hands nerved with true skill,  
May we ever the world-famous 'wickets' keep high,  
Of friendship, and peace, and goodwill !



#### SONG OF A GUARDIAN SPIRIT.

ONCE I sigh'd in childish sorrow, 'Father, give me  
strength to bear  
Life's stern struggle, never sinking underneath its load  
of care !'  
For I heard the din of battle rolling from the fields of  
strife,  
And I knew the competition in the fearful lists of life;  
But a glad voice, to my spirit sweetly singing, answer'd  
me,  
'In the Book of Books 'tis written, "As thy day thy  
strength shall be."  
  
'I behold Earth's patient toilers in the dark, dark  
mines below,  
And I see them half-despairing in their agony of woe—  
See them often fainting, fearful lest the cruse of oil  
may fail,  
And their grim foes, Want and Hunger, may at last  
o'er them prevail;

But I breathe to them that promise I am sent to  
breathe to thee—  
To the Strong for strength look upward: "As thy  
day thy strength shall be."

'I behold Earth's train of mourners bitter tears of  
sorrow shed,  
Drinking from the fount of Mara o'er the ashes of  
the dead;  
And when sister Hope forsakes them, then my voice  
they hear within,  
Whispering of the God-fed lilies which can neither  
toil nor spin;  
And I breathe to them the solace I am sent to breathe  
to thee—  
In the hour of sin and danger, "As thy day thy  
strength shall be."

Cease then, cease from vain repinings, rich man, poor  
man, young or old,  
And, in earnest struggling Heavenwards, in the cause  
of love be bold.  
Let the song the angel singeth, singeth sweetly unto  
thee,  
Keep thy heart from doubts unsullied, and thy spirit  
pure and free;  
Making music in thy bosom, it will lift thy hopes  
above,  
And thou'lt find, with thorny pathways, life is strewn  
with flowers of love.



## SPARROWS.

God speaks through every bird that sings,  
Nor borne on unfamiliar wings  
His messages are given ;  
It is not only in the grove,  
Amongst His fairest signs of love,  
We hear the songs of Heaven.

For there are birds no flower-strewn glen  
Can woo away from haunts of men,  
The city's wingèd guests—  
The sparrows, that, for sultry eaves,  
Forsake the cool of forest leaves,  
To build their smoke-stain'd nests.

I never hear their two sharp notes,  
Or see them in their russet coats  
About the city walls,  
But comes the thought, so precious still,  
Without our Heavenly Father's will  
Not even a sparrow falls.

By scatter'd crumbs of Plenty fed,  
To those who toil for daily bread,  
Faint in the crowded street,  
They wake a satisfying sense  
Of God's unfailing Providence,  
With comfort strong and sweet.

'Cheer-up! cheer-up!' is all their strain,  
But dare ye think 'tis chirp'd in vain?  
The Bard with gifted pen  
Can do no more, with all his power,  
Than sing of Hope in Sorrow's hour,  
To struggling souls of men.



### FAILURES.

My Green-house in these early days of Spring  
Fills me with more of sadness than delight,  
So much reminding of decay and blight;  
For there I find no perfect blossoming:  
So many vain attempts made manifest,  
And nothing good, which should have been the best.  
These spindling salvias, with half-perish'd flowers,  
Sicken me with the sense of wasted powers;  
And these ericas and camellias, grown  
In peatless soil, instead of Nature's own.  
And heliotropes that yield no scent at all—  
Strain'd up so tightly to the heated wall,  
The healthy sap can never find its way;  
So hang their tendrils relics of decay.  
Poor substitutes for Nature's favorites grown,  
With whom a failure is a thing unknown.  
Alas! instead of pleasant thoughts, I find  
Among these plants but emblems of the mind

Too common in the artificial air  
Of what is called 'Society ;' for there  
How much we see of growth too weak to bear  
Blossoms that win a blessing or a prayer —  
Minds, like this Green-house, cramm'd with failures,  
    fraught  
With sorrow to the teacher and the taught ; —  
Stunted, may-be the proper soil denied,  
Or kill'd with kindness false or misapplied,  
By injudicious cultivation train'd  
So that no trace of nature they retain'd,  
Till, as amongst these plants, alone are seen  
Imperfect buds of flowers that might have been.



#### MORE LIGHT.\*

So long a wanderer from the way  
That leads the soul to light,  
I yearn to see the dawn of day  
Break on my blinded sight.

Arise, Fair Morning Star, and shine  
Across Life's troubled sea :  
And let the light of Love divine,  
My guide and solace be.

\* 'In Thy light we shall see light.'—Ps. xxxvi. 9.

I know that for the pure in heart  
The promise Thou hast made,  
That they shall see Thee as Thou art,  
And never be afraid.

They only have the quiet mind ;  
To them alone is given  
The light by which to daily find  
The scatter'd flowers of Heaven.

Open mine eyes, O God of Light ;  
Bid Thou the darkness cease,  
That on my soul may dawn the sight  
And sense of perfect Peace.



## MORNING HYMN.

O THOU, who makest light divine  
Upon a darken'd world to shine,  
Be Thou, the Life, the Truth, the Way,  
Our shield and succour through the day ;—

That we, with willing heart and mind,  
In all we do Thy work may find ;  
And so to-night may conscious be  
Of drawing one day nearer Thee,—

And one day farther off from all  
Temptations that may make us fall,  
From sins that blight the heavenly flowers  
Thou givest to this life of ours ;

But one day nearer to the place  
Where we shall see Thee face to face ;  
Where, meeting dear ones gone before,  
Light shall in darkness die no more.



#### EVENING HYMN.

THE shadows fall o'er vale and hill,  
But Thou, O God, art with us still :  
However dark may grow the night,  
At eventide Thou givest light.

The glorious moon and stars above  
Are tokens of Thy constant love ;  
And round us countless signs appear,  
That, with Thy Angels, Thou art near.

Prayer to refresh the souls of men,  
Dews to the flowerets of the glen,  
Rest to the weary hand and brain,  
Sleep for forgetfulness of pain ;—

These are Thy gifts : the darkest hour  
Reveals Thy changeless care and power,  
Who ledest us with gracious hand  
Through sleep's and death's mysterious land,—

That, when we wake, Thy light may break  
With stronger glory, for the sake  
Of Him who gave His life to save  
Our souls the darkness of the grave.



### REST.

I would rest, I would rest at the close of day ;  
I would rest ere the light be pass'd away—  
Ere feeble and weary my life shall be,  
A burden to others as well as to me.

I would rest ere my hand become too weak  
To wipe a tear from a sufferer's cheek ;  
I would rest ere my voice too feeble grow  
To solace a mourning brother's woe.

I would rest, but not one duty shun ;  
I would rest, but not till my work is done :  
I would rest ere the dawn of that dreaded hour  
Of consciousness of losing power.

I would rest when the race of life is run ;  
I would rest when the battle is fought and won,  
Slaking the fever of Life's last pain  
With the sense that I have not lived in vain.

I would rest, that when my eyelids close,  
Steep'd in sweet sense of earn'd repose,  
The hush of that hour may broken be  
By the Angel of Mercy's message to me ;—

The welcome message, the welcome word  
From the loving lips of the gracious Lord—  
'Thou hast been faithful, hast done thy best ;  
Enter thou into Eternal Rest !'





## IN WINTER DAYS.

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*'The frost performs its secret ministry.'*

COLERIDGE.

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### THE FALLING LEAF.

**I**N the ashen drear November,  
I saw a wither'd leaf  
Fall from the plume-like branches,  
Like a black tear of grief.  
I said, 'O Leaf, that thou must go !  
I share in this dark hour thy woe.'

Methought the Leaf said, 'Wherefore grieve?  
What is the cold damp grave to me?  
It can but worthlessness receive ;  
My spirit lives in yonder tree :  
Death should thy soul no terror give,  
We live to die, we die to live.'



## TO THE ROBIN.

THE last flower withers on the lea,  
The biting blast blows bleak and chill ;  
Yet, Robin, thou dost come to me,  
Though shivering at my window-sill.  
Come in, and tell me, little one,  
Of the cold wintry world outside,  
Its dying flowers, its clouded sun,  
And the cold river's ice-bound tide.  
Tell me how mockingly the wind  
Breaks on the bosom of the sea,  
And tell me all that thou canst find  
In winter time to comfort thee.  
Yes, tell me with thy cheering note—  
Though all thou lovest best depart,  
The glad strains from thy tiny throat  
Rise from a never-frozen heart.

But for thy music, little bird,  
To Heaven thanksgivings shall ascend,  
In gratitude that I have heard  
And found in thee a welcome friend :  
For soon life's winter-time will come ;  
The snows of age fall thick and fast ;  
Flower after flower from my home  
Has fall'n 'neath Death's relentless blast.

The heart of man I know grows cold,  
The hand now warm soon chill'd may be ;  
But He who on the frozen wold  
Sustains thee, then will comfort me ;  
And I will pray like thee to grow  
When friends and fondest hopes depart —  
Like thee, who, 'midst the ice and snow,  
Singest with glad, contented heart.



## THE SNOW.

It comes, the fair, the beautiful,  
The lightly-falling snow,  
Softly as guardian angels' feet  
About our homes below.  
Last night the fields were graves of flowers,  
So dark, the rain-clouds wept :—  
Who wrought this miracle of change  
Whilst we unconscious slept ?

Too beautiful, too wonderful  
For human hands, I know ;  
A solace sweet thou bringest me,  
O saintly, silent snow !  
If I approach the great white throne  
Of Christ, with contrite prayer,  
The veil of Mercy o'er my sins  
Shall not be wanting there.

I know, beneath this ermine robe  
Of spotless purity,  
The dying leaves and rotting stalks  
Of wither'd beauty lie.  
But like the sins of men forgiven,  
By God's love buried deep;—  
See on the pure white coverlet  
How fair the moonbeams sleep!

O Thou who send'st the beauteous snow,  
Thou seest human life,  
The darkness and the dearth of love  
With which the world is rife;  
Would that so great a miracle  
Mine eyes o'er this could see,  
For Earth with all its sin conceal'd,  
How glorious it would be!



### THE FROST - FAIRY.

'OH! look, Father, look at the white window-pane;  
See, see you these flower-like pictures again!  
Yes, this seems a garland of daisies to be,  
And those like the fringed flowers we found by the sea.

Did the bright angels bring them from star-worlds  
above,

When they came down to listen for prayers that they  
love?

So beautiful are they, they glitter so bright,  
I wonder how they could all come in a night !'

'My child, they are beautiful, and you should know,  
Though kings could not make them, 'twas God made  
them so.

And He, who these miracles wrought in a night,  
Is ever preparing our hearts new delight ;  
The darkness and light are alike in His eyes,  
Who scatters His blessings unseen from the skies,  
And who, while we slept through the dark, silent hours,  
Sent down the Frost-fairy to sprinkle these flowers.



### RALPH ROY.

RALPH ROY, the village veteran,  
Was sitting at his ease,  
Once more within his cottage-home,  
His children round his knees ;  
The fire was glowing warm and bright—  
For 'twas a cold December night.

He was beloved by old and young,  
As all brave men should be,  
And proudly he would tell the tales  
Of England's chivalry—  
Of many a great and famous fray,  
When France and England won the day.

'Now, father,' said the little ones,  
'Tell us the tale to-night,  
Of how the Russians storm'd the camp,  
When England won the fight ;  
And how you came to get the scar  
Upon your forehead in the war.'

This was the favorite theme of Roy,  
The story loved the best ;  
And, with a look of pride, he stroked  
The medal on his breast,  
And then began again to tell  
The tale his listeners loved so well.

'It was at dead of night,' said he ;  
'The snow lay on the ground ;  
But, noiselessly as crept the foe,  
We heard a warning sound :  
Our camp in solemn silence lay,  
Each heart expectant of the fray.

'At length the signal beacon blazed—  
Like lions on the foe  
Sprang up the British hero-hearts,  
And dealt the deadly blow ;

And wildly rose the thrilling cry  
Of "England! France! and Victory!"

'So shrouded was the crescent moon,  
We scarce knew friend from foe;  
So dark was all, we did not see  
The blood-stain'd, trampled snow:  
But when the dread sortie was o'er,  
Two hundred slept to wake no more!

'Now, wounded in the fatal fray,  
I felt Death's terrors creep  
Over my spirit, heart, and brain,  
Like fearful dreams in sleep;  
And then I felt no further pain—  
And I was counted with the slain.

'At length I woke as from a trance—  
The place was strange to me;  
I heard the dying round me groan,  
And cries of agony;  
But, like an Angel, o'er my bed  
Bent low a sweet and saintly head.

'I thought it was God's Angel, come  
To take my soul to Him,  
And raised my hand above mine eyes;  
But all was dark and dim—  
Save o'er that sweet angelic face  
There beam'd a smile of heavenly grace.

'She placed a cordial to my lips,  
And soothed my burning brow;

Then whisper'd softly in mine ear,  
"You'll soon be better now."  
These words so made my soul rejoice,  
I thought it was an Angel's voice !'

'Was it an Angel, father dear ?'  
Each earnest listener said ;  
'Was it an Angel, father dear,  
That hover'd round your bed ?'  
'Yes, sweet ones, yes, of mortal birth,  
It was God's Angel of the Earth !

'Twas she who, with the holiest thoughts  
And purity of heart,  
Left her own home and native land,  
To do the better part :  
And if she had not come to me,  
You now would orphan children be.'

Oh ! lovely was the grateful look  
Of those who heard this tale ;  
And from each tongue a blessing fell  
On Florence Nightingale ;  
To which Ralph Roy responded then,  
With solemn earnestness, 'Amen !'



## STREET MUSIC.

WHEN from the street, in Winter drear,  
The sound of music sweet I hear,  
A scene of Pity touch'd with pain  
Comes like some half-forgotten strain.

It was a day in Christmas week ;  
The north-east wind blew bitter bleak ;  
Sharp was the cold to shoeless feet  
Of weary wanderers in the street.

There was so much of want and woe,  
That, looking out upon the snow,  
I wish'd the drifts heap'd by the door  
Manna had been to feed the poor ;

And that the falling flakes there seen  
Morsels of angels' bread had been,  
To feed the famish'd young and old  
Who shiver'd in the piercing cold.

I saw so many in the crowd  
With sharp pinch'd faces, sorrow-bow'd,  
Hurrying past, I wonder'd why  
God could permit such misery.



At length, and almost opposite  
The house from which I gazed, a sight  
Mine eyes beheld of suffering,  
Which answer'd all such questioning.

A poor young starving organ-boy,  
A wandering native of Savoy,  
Dropt on a door-step, with a cry  
Of bitterest grief and agony.

Such wind as never stirs the flowers  
Of orange in his native bowers,  
Seem'd drifting, with its piercing breath,  
Towards the boy the frosts of death.

He strove, amidst the snow, in vain  
The organ-pipes to sound again ;  
His fingers so benumb'd had grown,  
They were as frozen as the stone.

Past many a house and many a church,  
Alas ! he'd tramp'd in weary search  
Of pitying heart and helping hand,—  
So scarce even in a Christian land ;—

Till, at the outskirts of the town,  
On this door-step the boy sank down ;  
And, but for succour near, I ween  
That stone his dying-bed had been.

He look'd around, with piteous eye,  
To window and to balcony,  
Until a little child at play  
Beheld him as he frozen lay.

And, answering the despairing glance  
Of his appealing countenance ;  
With eager feet, the little maid  
Ran forth the dying boy to aid.

This Lamb of the Good Shepherd's fold  
Bent o'er the sufferer in the cold,  
And whisper'd softly words of cheer,  
In the poor hapless wanderer's ear.

Orpheus with lute of subtle tone  
May call the soul of sound his own,  
But Music's strongest power is given  
To Pity, fairest child of Heaven.

I only wish that there was more  
Of such 'street music' for the poor,  
The famish'd ones, who even now  
May be half perish'd in the snow.



ROBIN RED-BREAST.

THE bleak wind blows o'er the snow-crown'd hill,  
The flowers and the swallows are gone,  
And the willow weeps over the swollen rill,  
As the stream flows coldly on ;

But the little Redbreast, a welcome guest,  
Alone sits on the vane,  
And sings, as he turns to North, South, East, and West,  
This gay and light-hearted strain :—

‘ Oh ! the wind of the South, the wind of the South,  
Brings many a joy I know,  
As it gaily sips, with amorous lips,  
The sweets the flowers bestow ;  
And the wind of the West brings treasures blest  
To the woods and leafy bowers,  
As it shouts aloud to the drifting cloud  
To give up its silver showers ;  
But the wind from the cold North-east blows now,  
And, oh ! it brings many a joy, I trow.

‘ Cheer up, cheer up ! for the wind of the North  
I love to hear it rush bravely forth ;  
It brings the blush to the holly-tree,  
It tries the heart of Constancy,  
When rain descends, false summer friends  
From the woods and the forest flee ;  
But ye know, when ye hear its chill gusts blow,  
Ye have a true friend in me !  
And it brings, with the snow, to the fire a glow,  
And many a laugh ’neath the mistletoe :  
Then cheer up, cheer up, while the North blasts blow ;  
For they bring us a many delights, I trow.’



## THE WHITE CAMELLIA.

In the festal hall, in a Parian vase, with fern and ever-  
green,  
Upon the dark camellia leaves one snowy bud was  
seen,  
White as a young dove resting upon the leafy bough,  
Or as a Cherub's spotless wing, or marbled Naiad's  
brow.

Not in the sunny gardens of Oriental clime,  
Not with exotics rich and rare, the gems of summer-  
time ;  
But, thanks to imperial Josephine, transplanted from  
afar,  
Amidst a scene of light and love shone this fair floral  
star.

Not by the potent influence of young Aurora's light,  
Nor kiss'd by summer winds that waft the silver dew  
of night ;  
No birds of gorgeous plumage sang beneath its fragile  
stem,  
Nor fountain wept its blissful tears the shining leaves  
to gem.

But though no gentle zephyr there exhaled a fragrant  
sigh,  
Yet perfumed was the atmosphere as groves of Araby ;  
For Music with her sister Song spell-bound the banquet  
room,  
Blending their fairy charms to woo the bud into the  
bloom.

And as a loving heart expands beneath a dear one's  
eye,  
Or some familiar voice is heard or well-known step  
glides by,  
So, as with secret consciousness of Song's resistless  
power,  
As with exultant heart the bud burst into perfect  
flower.



### THE BLIND MAN.

OF I have seen him on the Sabbath-day  
Kneel with devotion in the aisle to pray ;  
And 'twas a solemn sight, indeed, to see  
The old man in God's temple bend the knee —  
His grey locks falling sadly o'er his brow,  
Furrow'd by care and Time's relentless plough.  
He loved to hear the Pastor's voice declare,  
Eyes blind on Earth in Heaven receive their sight ;  
And listening to the wondrous miracle  
Of Bartimæus with intense delight,  
Though sightless, yet he seem'd almost to gaze  
Upon his Saviour, who the afflicted heal'd ;  
And a bright smile his pale, wan cheek illumed,  
As if the Future was to him unseal'd,  
And hidden light to us, to him had been reveal'd.

## SONG.

OH, no ! Summer days are not over :  
The chill wintry breezes may sigh,  
The buds on the myrtle-bough wither,  
The swallows may far away fly :  
Let the winds chant their prophecy solemn,  
Let flowers from sunny groves flee,  
A bird in my home-nest sings sweetly  
In Winter as Summer to me.

Earth's loveliest roses still blossom,  
And make my heart's home hallow'd ground ;  
The Bird nestling close to my bosom  
Makes Summer reign all the year round.  
Not yet hath Death's chill touch of sorrow  
Torn Love's fairest flowers from Life's tree ;  
And though clouds may hang over the morrow,  
God spare such a Winter to me !



## WINTER NIGHTS.

BRIGHT, laughing Spring, that comes from Heaven  
with garlands round her brow,  
And leaves her footprints on the flowers in field and  
waving bough,  
Though she may wake a thrill of joy through earth  
and sky and sea,  
She bringeth not life's dearest hours of happiness to  
me.

The Summer, as if maiden Spring to womanhood had  
grown,  
Beautiful 'midst her lilies and musk and rose o'er-  
blown,  
With songs of birds, she showers her wealth of  
blessings rare and free;  
But she brings not the dearest hours of happiness  
to me.

And Autumn, with her clustering vines and mellow  
fruitage, comes,  
With glad songs of the gleaners and shouts of Harvest-  
homes;  
But all her sunset splendours and reapers' songs of  
glee  
Bring not the dearest hours of love or happiness to  
me.

But when the Winter dons his robe of pure and  
saintly snow,  
When holly-berries glisten, and the biting frost-winds  
blow,  
Then near my heart is nestling joy as sweet as joy  
can be ;  
For a Winter-night by the glad fire-light, with my own  
true love, for me.



## RELICS.

How often round some trifling thing —  
A tress of hair, a wither'd flower —  
Life's loved associations cling,  
With strangely fascinating power.  
Sometimes some half-forgotten strain,  
Or some torn letter's tear-blurr'd line,  
Will wake, with mingled joy and pain,  
Thoughts of the days of auld-lang-syne.

So, Myra, came the reverie  
Of days of first-love long gone by,  
When 'mong some relics dear to me  
Your wedding favours met mine eye.  
I lived again that hour of hours,  
When, standing at the altar-side,  
I saw another's hand in yours —  
I heard another call you 'Bride.'



And then on Memory's wings afar  
My thoughts were borne to earlier days,  
When you, Love's radiant morning star,  
Illumined life's flower-scatter'd ways.  
And I remember with what pride  
I blended with my songs your name,  
When you stood smiling by my side  
From whom the inspiration came.

Oh! Myra, ever must it seem  
A mystery with a meaning strange,  
That such a glorious morning dream  
Should know so marvellous a change.  
Long since we both have ceased to love,—  
Yea, we have almost learn'd to hate  
The things which once, all else above,  
Made our young souls with joy elate.

I often think how once we met—  
Of many and many a fond embrace,  
Of vows we plighted to forget,  
Of smiles that glorified your face;  
How I at eve, with eager feet,  
Would run to clasp you to my heart;  
How early and how fond to meet,  
How late and loath we were to part.

And yet the right to call you 'dear'  
Has long unenvied pass'd away;  
I look without a sigh or tear  
On relics of your marriage-day.

Surely such wondrous changes must  
Have held some purpose wise conceal'd :  
Were they decreed, that truer trust  
And purer love should be reveal'd?



## TO A CHRYSANTHEMUM.

BEAUTIFUL bloom of November, I love thee :  
Last of the line of God's fair race of flowers,  
Heedless of darkness around and above thee,  
Joy thou rekindlest in desolate bowers.

Poet hath never found emblem so cherish'd,  
Constancy never a symbol more true,  
Than thou, who when Summer's last glories have  
perish'd,  
Mak'st Beauty in Nature's lap blossom anew.

Beautiful Winter flower ! Destiny never  
Decreed fairer life than thy flower-buds dis-  
close ;  
Adversity's children cling lovingly ever  
About thee, as nightingale's songs round the  
rose.

But bird-song nor sun-light could woo thy bright  
garlands ;

Thy smiles thou hast kept for these dark, dreary  
hours ;

And when Summer false friends have flown into  
far lands,

In Love's strongest beauty thou puttest forth flowers.

Not only where Death layeth waste smiling gardens

Thou breakest in blossoms of love and delight ;

Not only where Winter the frozen soil hardens

Thy star-buds of glory light Nature's dark night ;

But far, far away from the country's green valley—

Where Penury, Sorrow, and Hunger devour,

In many a crowded street, dark court, and alley,

Thou bloomest, the city-child's favorite flower.

Fair sign of God's mercy that never forsakest,

Thou thrillst my heart with emotions of cheer ;

And, oh ! what is Fame to such Love as thou wakest,

Sweet Flower smiling brightest when Earth is most  
drear.



## DECEMBER, 1861.

WHEN at Belshazzar's feast around the board  
The festal mirth rose loudest, and the strains  
Of revelry were echo'd through his halls,  
The shadow of the Awful Hand was seen  
Writing a nation's doom upon the wall.  
The voice of song was silenced suddenly ;  
The red lips, deeper tinged by purple wine,  
Were blanch'd with terror, and a strange wild fear  
Fell on the hearts of the rejoicing guests.  
So, while we gather for the Christmas feast,  
And deck our homes again with holly wreaths,  
Behold the Shadow falls ! The Spoiler comes,  
Whose touch the princely palace desolates.  
He strikes the babbling lips of Pleasure dumb,  
And with his icy hand steals from our hearts  
Those happy hopes, the flowers of Christmas tide.  
Behold the cypress where the holly gleam'd !  
Muffle the Yule-tide peal, for through the land,  
From the proud palace to the lowliest cot,  
The wail of grief goes forth—' Dead ! dead !  
The royalest Consort of the royalest Queen,  
Whose splendid empire is a nation's heart.'

To yon old Castle of a royal line,  
Strong with its battled towers and hoary walls,  
A few days since the happy palace home

Of an unbroken circle, there has been  
An uninvited guest,—a stranger grim,  
The stern Magician whose dark name is Death.  
He smiled a bitter smile upon the pomp  
And pageantry of State ; he hush'd  
The voice of gladness making music there,  
And spread these sounds of terror through the halls,  
'The royalest Consort of the royalest Queen  
Has been alone with Death, and he is gone—  
Gone, with him, into the Silent Land.'

But yesterday, the strong, the brave, the good,  
Amidst the symbols of the state of kings ;  
To-day asleep—sleeping the dreamless sleep ;  
While o'er his bier the widow'd wife bends low,  
In reverential awe and grief sublime ;  
For while she gazes on that noble form,  
Wrapt in the solemn majesty of Death,  
She thinks of days gone by—bright, happy days,  
When those fond eyes, now closed, beheld with joy  
The bloom of beauty on her bridal flowers.  
O Death, thou mightiest potentate of Earth,  
Thou, who mad'st even the Redeemer weep,  
Still art thou strong in thy prerogative !  
For, lo ! the queenliest woman weeps—she weeps,  
Tears, precious as the jewels of her crown,  
And dearer in her people's eyes ; who see  
How Love o'er Death is more than conqueror.

He is gone—the tidings from those Palace halls,  
Flash'd by a thousand wires, spread grief and woe.

Struck home, behold the poison'd shaft of Death  
Quivers with sorrow in a nation's heart ;  
For, lo ! a wail of grief arose while we  
Worshipp'd within the temple of our God.\*  
There was a pause, fill'd by the people's sob,  
When in the ritual a familiar name  
Was blotted from their prayers, and first they felt  
That he was gone where prayers no more avail.

The people stand by this stern stroke dismay'd.  
Not for the titled Prince so much their grief,  
As for the man, the husband, father, friend,  
The nobleman of Nature, royal of heart,  
Princely in generous actions and good deeds,  
Whose memory is writ on grateful hearts  
And hallow'd by a sorrowing nation's tears.



### CHRISTMAS EVE.

THERE'S a sound of a festive morrow,  
It rings with delight o'er the snow,  
Dispelling the shadows of sorrow  
With promise that makes the heart glow.  
The minster-bells joyously ringing  
Awaken o'er valley and hill

\* The news was generally known in London on Sunday, December 15th, 1861.

Glad tidings the angels are singing,  
Of Glory, of Peace, and Goodwill.  
Unchanged, the stars spangle Heaven's banner,  
Though centuries onward have roll'd,  
And to thoughts of blest Bethlehem's manger  
Still guide they the wise as of old.

Yon planet beholds the proud baron,  
Who lone in his halls seems to be ;  
But he is not alone in his castle,  
There is one whom our eyes cannot see—  
An angel invisibly moving,  
Who heard the brave words that he said—  
'Not a soul on my broad lands to-morrow  
Shall want for a morsel of bread.'  
How joyously smileth that angel—  
Her name it is Charity ;—sweet  
Are her haunts in the hearts of the 'loving,  
And bless'd are the prints of her feet.

A bright constellation gleams over  
A thousand dear homes of delight,  
Where Love-sparkling eyes return glances  
As pure as the star-beams of night.  
Yes, where the huge faggot is blazing  
So gaily through lattice and door,  
From thence rise the sounds of rejoicing,  
For laughter shakes rafter and floor.  
Clear away the 'black diamonds,' bring hither  
The yule log, and welcome its blaze ;  
Whilst 'wassail' we fill for our master,  
And drink to his health and long days.

And the family group of the heavens—  
The Pleiades—gaze like fond eyes  
On a far away spot, from whence joyous  
The sounds of heart-welcome arise :  
Hark ! hark ! lip to lip ! oh, what rapture !  
How joyously riseth the strain—  
'A blessing on Christmas for ever,  
That brings us together again.'  
An angel peeps in at the window,  
And smiles as he looketh around,  
And kisses the mistletoe berries  
That wave o'er the love-hallow'd ground.

And Thou, blessed 'Star of the Morning,'  
We wait for Thy glorious light,  
Which now, Hope's horizon adorning,  
Shall pierce all the shadows of night.  
Thy birthday make Thou the blest natal  
Of joy and true peace in each soul,  
That, weak, worn, and wearily laden,  
Feels Death's icy waves round it roll.  
Let it hear, like the listening shepherds,  
That music which never grows old—  
Those tidings of peace and of glory  
The angels in Bethlehem told !






## THE CHRISTMAS FIRE.

GATHER ye round the Christmas fire ;  
The bells of Yule-tide chime again ;  
And ere the year's last days expire,  
Let us forget the wind and rain ;  
And as the holly berries glow  
Through bristling leaves of thorn so bright,  
Through cares of life and thoughts of woe  
Let love-deeds shine with sacred light :  
Close heart and hand 'gainst all things cold ;  
Let breath of Hate and Scorn pass by ;  
Shut out the selfish, and be bold  
To welcome Peace and Charity.

Gather ye round the Christmas fire ;  
And, bright as sparks that upward fly,  
Heavenwards let grateful thoughts aspire  
For days of blessing hurried by.  
Mercies, like golden flowers of Heaven,  
Scatter'd in life's path through the year,  
Surely shall not in vain be given,  
Or fail one drooping heart to cheer.  
Winds of adversity may rave ;  
But lovely is the Christmas smile,  
That bids the fainting soul be brave,  
For winter will but last a while.

Gather ye round the Christmas fire ;  
And if your ring be perfect yet,  
Surely your praises should rise higher  
Than theirs who some lost love regret.  
And ye who miss some darling face,  
Whose circle, this year incomplete,  
Reminds you of a vacant place,  
Take consolation true and sweet—  
Strive to forget all selfish pain,  
And celebrate Christ's birth in love ;  
Think of your loss as truest gain—  
Your Father needed him above.

Gather ye round the Christmas fire—  
Gather, ye dear ones, while ye may ;  
Think how much love ye may require  
Ere dawns another Christmas Day.  
Is there beyond its warm bright glow  
One sufferer for an unjust deed ?  
Or any poor one whom ye know  
That ye can help in wintry need ?  
Or if remembrance of a wrong,  
Or injury still unforgiven,  
Comes up appealing loud and long  
To-day between your heart and Heaven,  
No longer close ye heart and hand ;  
Warm'd by your happy Christmas fire,  
Dispel some darkness in the land,  
Ere life's last gleams of light expire !



## CHRISTMAS.

WELL may we welcome Christmas, with song and  
chime of bells,  
For round the hearts of all on earth he casts his mystic  
spells ;

He opens with the magic key of kindness every heart,  
And smiles to see the memory of sorrows past depart ;  
He comes with mirth and laughter, with carol and  
with glee,  
And the gladdest time of all the year is Christmas-  
time to me.

I love to hear kind voices ! I love to see bright eyes ;  
I love to hear from joyous bells the gladsome pæans  
rise ;

And when the snow is on the ground, and biting winds  
blow cold,  
To gather round the glad fireside, where social tales  
are told ;

To feel the blessed influence of Love and Friendship's  
reign,  
When those that long have parted been are reconciled  
again.

Well may we then love Christmas, for nothing seems  
too high,  
And nothing seems too lowly for the love-glance of  
his eye.

A true republican is he, the friend of equal right,  
Who advocates fraternity, and propagates delight :  
And for the aged and the poor how earnestly he  
pleads,  
Whilst every moment of his reign is fraught with kindly  
deeds.

Come hang, then, up the mistletoe (true olive-branch),  
that Peace  
May bless our paths with pleasantness, and make our  
joys increase ;  
And let us too, like Christmas, strive the suffering  
world to cheer,  
To help the poor disconsolate, to wipe the mourner's  
tear ;  
Yes, let us each one make a vow to do whate'er we  
can  
To solace in adversity the sufferings of man.



## THE ROYAL FEAST.

### A CHRISTMAS BALLAD.

KING Christmas held a royal feast,  
And, heedless of the weather,  
Though bleak the blast blew from the east,  
His guests all met together.

Wide was his glorious banquet-hall ;  
And bells from many a steeple,  
Like friendly voices, seem'd to call  
Together all the people.

Fond friends from lands afar and near,  
From dark and crowded places,  
Came forth to share the monarch's cheer,  
With smiles and happy faces.

His shrines of love were richly dight,  
With glorious jewels shining ;  
The coral beads of holly bright  
With mistletoe pearls twining.

The board with viands rich was spread  
As the festive hour grew near,  
And faster to the banquet sped  
Peasant as well as peer.

Now, at his palace gateway stood  
An Angel clothed in white,  
Whose presence fill'd the multitude  
With tenderest delight.

With smiles did each the Angel greet  
Who knew her sacred mission,  
Who felt 'twas she that welcome sweet  
Granted, on *one* condition —

That each should take the token blest  
That she with blessing proffer'd,  
Since none could be a welcome guest  
Who scorn'd the joys she offer'd.

Brightly the glorious Angel smiled  
    (Though not a word was spoken),  
Whilst even to the youngest child  
    She gave a treasured token.

With joyous thoughts and gladsome voice,  
    They pass'd the mystic portal —  
Free in the palace to rejoice,  
    And share the joys immortal.

And never sweeter sounds did rise,  
    Nor eyes more brightly glisten'd ;  
For e'en the stars in yon blue skies  
    Grew brighter as they listen'd.

But 'midst these happy groups there were  
    Unwelcome forms and faces,  
On whom the stamp of selfish care  
    Had left eternal traces.

Ah ! these appear'd like spectral guests,  
    Dark forms of solemn warning :  
With hearts like poison'd scorpion-nests,  
    They every joy were scorning.

They knew not, on that hallow'd ground  
    Heaven seem'd with Earth united,  
But sneer'd at those they saw around  
    Who love with love requited.

To them the smile of innocence  
    Awoke no thrill of pleasure :  
No thought of Heaven, howe'er intense  
    Was deem'd by them a treasure.

From blessings heap'd upon the board,  
Their jaundiced eyes turn'd blindly ;  
To none, it seem'd, could they afford  
A word of blessing kindly.

They coldly turn'd from kindness shown,  
No good intention seeing ;  
And even the holly seem'd a crown  
Of thorns, to pierce their being.

A curse seem'd resting on their fate ;  
And though no word was spoken,  
I knew they enter'd at the gate  
Without the Angel's token.

But when I saw the last of them  
Had from delight departed,  
I ask'd the Angel, what bright gem  
Was at the gate imparted ?

She said — ' I gave the sacred spell  
That binds these hearts together ;  
I make them love this feast so well,  
Though wintry be the weather.

' Men call me " Charity " who know  
Not yet my home above ;  
But there, where I no gifts bestow,  
My Sisters call me " Love. "

' Open this casket : you will find  
The secret gem within it ;  
And happy he whose lot it be  
This festive hour to win it. '

I touch'd its secret spring so bright :  
*This was the gem, my brother —*  
*A Heart that yearn'd the wrong'd to right,*  
*And truly loved another !*

This heart with nectar fills the cup  
Of life to overflowing,  
Blessing the hand that raises up  
The boughs with berries glowing.

Though wild and wintry blew the blast,  
While envious eyes were weeping,  
All with this gem, from first to last,  
Were happy Christmas keeping.

To them the joys King Christmas gives  
Shall each year be increased ;  
For, oh ! that heart, where'er it lives,  
Makes life a royal feast.

But he who comes with selfish thought,  
For such a scorn'd offender  
King Christmas has no pleasure brought,  
And the berries lose their splendour.

Then all who hear the minstrel's song,  
May each, the gem possessing,  
Be found their fellow-men among  
With works and words of blessing.





## WHEN I WAS YOUNG.

When I was young, then Yule-tide came to me  
With joys known but to children sorrow-free :  
'Twas then the feast of Love, Affection's jubilee.

Now Memory, like the frost upon the pane,  
Twines her weird flowers upon the heart and brain ;  
Life's passion-blasts blow chill through storm and  
rain.

For though within this room I seem alone,  
Spirits of dear ones, from their places gone,  
Seem to be speaking as with sadden'd tone.

They lead me back again to well-known places,  
Robb'd of their old, their dear familiar graces ;  
And then they look so sad, these shadowy phantom  
faces.

The crimson holly hangs about the room,  
As it was wont before a thought of gloom  
Led me in tears to weep o'er Memory's tomb.

The crimson berries still gleam bright with glee,  
But, oh ! their light of love is lost to me—  
The holly seems a crown of thorn to be.

Yet, through the casement gleams a vision fair;  
The untrampled snow, asleep in moonlight there,  
Speaks of the spotless robes the angels wear.

And through the star-beams from the rosy east,  
I seem to hear voices that long have ceased,  
Bidding me welcome to their Christmas Feast.



### TO THE NEW YEAR.

New Year, here's a welcome to thee —  
A welcome that springs from the heart!  
Thy light reveals glories to me,  
And thou dost fresh courage impart.  
Hope shines like the star of the East  
On the birth of this infant of Time;  
Its lustre my faith has increased,  
And made resolutions sublime.

Like a plain of immaculate snow  
Untrodden—to mortals unknown,  
And fair as the infant year's brow,  
The Future is beauty alone.

Let us gaze on the sinless awhile,  
Nor waste idle tears on the dead ;  
For, trusting to Heaven's own smile,  
We fear not the unknown to tread.

From the Past, like a desolate shore  
With wrecks of resolve overstrewn,  
Turn away ; for the Future once more  
To the heart sings a life-stirring tune.  
It sings not of death, but of birth :  
Weep not on the grave of decay—  
Behold the new joy of the earth,  
A Phoenix arises to-day !





## GATHERED LEAVES.

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*As, when among fresh-fallen leaves  
A loving eye with joy perceives  
Some blossoms it had fancied lost,  
Forgotten by the early frost,  
The frail flowers win a sonder look;  
So for these last leaves of my book  
I would a kindred greeting find  
From those who welcome keep in mind  
The posie I rejoiced to bring  
In sunnier days of early Spring.*

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## ADVENT FLOWERS.\*

**D**ECEMBER days dawn'd sad and drear;  
Regretful tears were shed  
For flow'rets lost, the loved, the dear,  
The unforgotten Dead;  
And over meads of wither'd grass  
And woods of dripping trees  
We seem'd to feel the shudder pass  
With every fitful breeze.

\* *Primula Sinensis.*

'Truly, these days of Death are dark,'  
Was our desponding cry :  
With faithless hearts we fail'd to mark  
One sign of mercy nigh ;—  
A simple, lovely cottage-flower  
Peer'd through the window-pane,  
And, gifted as with Angels' power,  
Renew'd our hopes again.

When Summer days were fair and bright,  
Was sown the primrose seed  
Which gave us now such dear delight  
In this our hour of need.  
So should we gather to our hearts,  
Whilst yet 'tis call'd 'to-day,'  
The precious seed which joy imparts  
When Summer's pass'd away.

First Primrose of the Christian year,  
My pretty Advent flower,  
Thou puttest forth thy buds to cheer  
When falls the chilling shower.  
I love thee for thy promise fair,  
Breathed with thy cowslip-breath,  
Sweet as a voice that answers prayer  
In the dark time of death.

As, when we lose some heart's delight,  
And joy and hope seem gone,  
Across the darkest gloom of night  
Breaks first the gleam of dawn ;

So joyous Advent thoughts arise ;  
This Flower speaks not in vain :  
'Heaven's loving-kindness round thee lies,  
In one unbroken chain.'

No season is quite flowerless ;  
God would not have it so ;  
And hands are oft outstretch'd to bless  
Which we nor see nor know :  
For oft when we with doubts have striven,  
And wept o'er graves of earth,  
We might have heard the voice of Heaven,  
'This is no death, but birth !'

We thought the world of flowers bereft,  
Swept by the chilling gale ;  
When, lo ! we find a Primrose left  
To tell so sweet a tale.  
As, sorrowing for some vanish'd friend,  
The truth fades out within—  
That where God's mercies *seem* to end  
They verily begin.

'His ways are not our ways'—His Power  
Disdaineth not to teach  
By ministers like thee, frail Flower,  
Whose breath surpasseth speech.  
And by thy pencill'd leaves so green  
I see, with sight too dim,  
The links of love, by which unseen  
He draws my soul to Him.

## THE BROKEN RING.\*

'TILL death do part'—the solemn words were breathed  
By Bride and Bridegroom in the sight of God :  
The fairest garlands of July were wreathed,  
And scatter'd in the pathway that they trod.

And in that morning hour of young Love's dream  
The words awoke but hopes of bliss to come :  
No shadow yet had fallen o'er the stream  
Of life ; Joy reign'd in heart and home.

Forth from the consecrated aisle they came,  
Midst fond 'Amens' to prayers for blessings dear,  
From friends who breathed the young Bride's new-  
found name,  
Which fell in pleasant music on the ear.

\* 'Parting is Death, at least as far as life is concerned. A passion comes to an end ; it is carried off in a coffin ; it drops out of life one way or other, and the earth-clods close over it, and we see it no more. But it has been a part of our souls, and it is eternal.'—*W. M. Thackeray.*

'Surely every one who has a heart must feel how easily he could part with earth, water, and skies, and all the outward glories of nature, but how utterly impossible it is to reconcile the mind to the prospect of the extinction of our earthly affections, that such a heart-annihilation has all the gloom of an eternal ceasing to be.'—*Sara Coleridge.*

She wore the ring. The Bridegroom with a thrill  
Of purest joy beheld the circlet shine,  
Round which were wreathed the mystic words 'I will,'  
Which gave him first the right to call her 'Mine.'

'With precious jewels,' as the years sped on  
That Bridegroom said, 'my Love, the ring is set :  
These souls of children, which our lives have won,  
They bind the golden circlet closer yet.'

'Till Death do part,'—how little reck'd they then,  
The shade invoked already stalk'd so near :  
Those words, then utter'd before God and men,  
Gain'd shape, and form, and meaning dread and  
drear.

No longer vague as Thought unclothed by Speech,  
As when inwoven with the marriage vow :  
Death, that seem'd then so far from human reach,  
More than a name made known his presence now.

The Ring, put on upon that summer-day,  
When Love and Hope might well forget the grave,  
From the cold hand of unresisting clay  
Was given back by Death to him who gave—

But not as he had given ; the golden band  
The finger of the Dead could not restore,  
Except in broken fragments, to the hand  
Which could return Love's pressure nevermore.



Motherless children, who knew not their loss  
In the destruction of the golden ring,  
Prattled beside her grave ; as yet, the Cross  
Cast no dark shadow o'er the flowers of Spring.

How strangely Love of earth is mix'd with Death !  
The silent Hand annuls the marriage bond ;  
But doth Love die then with a fleeting breath ?  
And hath it nought to hope in the Beyond ?

I dare not think of Death a thought so mean ;  
For through his darkest shadows breaketh light,  
Who stands alone our souls and theirs between  
With whom our spirits yearn to re-unite.

For Love, which is of soul the finer part,  
Is surely no such evanescent joy,  
That He who truly joineth heart to heart  
Creates the blessing only to destroy.



## A BALLAD OF ALSACE.

‘Look out, look out, the train flies fast; but see  
within our ken  
The fields of Gravelotte and of Woerth and crags of  
Spicheren.  
Ye would not think yon trailing vines and waving  
wheat would grow  
Upon such grave-yards as these fields were two short  
years ago.

‘And yonder quiet valley seems already to wipe out  
The signs of ruin and of death in all that fatal rout;  
And now so clear yon streamlet flows, then but a  
crimson pool,  
Which scarce could yield one drop wherewith men’s  
fever’d lips to cool.

‘Had ye but heard the roar and rush of Battle’s  
rolling tide,  
Ye scarce would think in such brief time its echoes  
could subside:  
Where yonder mill grinds bread of life, the mitrailleuse  
ground Death;  
The hillside, now so sweet with flowers, reek’d then  
with poisonous breath.

‘ Redder than yonder popped wheat was all the valley  
then,  
For blood in rivers flow’d adown the heights of  
Spicheren :  
Upon that spot Napoleon stood with little Lulu\* by,  
And I stood close enough to see blanch’d cheek and  
glittering eye.

‘ Oh, glorious was our victory, and ever in my prayer  
I have not ceased with joy to thank my God that I  
fought there,  
When “To the Rhine !” the cry broke forth, and,  
nerved by Heaven’s strong hand,  
Germania march’d invincible for God and Fatherland.’

Thus spake a grey-hair’d veteran, but in the railway car  
A fair, blue-eyed Alsatian maid sat next this man of war.  
In French *patois* she spake, ‘ I too was here in those  
red days ;  
I saw the grim and ghastly sight, I watch’d the camp-  
fires blaze.

‘ I heard the rolling beat of drums, the bugle blast, the  
shout,  
When thousands of the best of France fell in the fatal  
rout :  
And I can see with other eyes than thine, old man,  
this scene,  
And think as thou canst never think of what it once  
hath been.

\* The *soubriquet* with the Germans for the Prince Imperial.

'For here, before that Harvest dawn'd, a joyous home  
was mine ;

Oh ! fruitful were the pleasant fields, and fair the  
clustering vine,

In days ye call so glorious, the hated Uhlans came,  
And trampled down the standing corn, and wrapt the  
walls in flame.

'And then the dreaded Red Prince rode with terror  
in his train ;

He left our vineyards plough'd with shot, our home-  
steads graves of slain.

I saw what you call victory—the Emperor's broken  
Guard ;

I heard the cries of agony go up from yon green sward.

'One brother shot at Tour-le-Mars, and one at Vion-  
ville—

Look out ! O God, I seem to hear the battle raging  
still ;

For what to me these fields so green ? I see them  
stain'd with blood ;

I see alone the dreaded spot where my brave Brother  
stood.

'As when the cannon struck him down, while still  
within his hand

He grasp'd the banner of the brave—of France, our  
native land—

And once more only after this I saw his face again,  
When kneeling on the altar steps at Strasburg's holy  
fane.

'The *Miserere* floated with the incense up the aisle,  
And then it was, the while I pray'd, I saw his happy smile,  
His dear fond look of love; when lo! the vision sweet  
was gone:

It pass'd, as through the faint frail mist the morning-  
star at dawn.

'But as I linger'd, straining still my longing eyes, to  
see

Again that look of tenderness from Heaven smile out  
on me,

The men ye call "the brave" had struck our holy  
church with shell,

And with the shot the broken roof in burning frag-  
ments fell.

'The shot that struck the crucifix shot off from me a limb,  
The one weak arm upraised to God in humble prayer  
to Him,

That He would stay the work of Hell, would bid the  
battle cease,

And give our famine-stricken streets the heavenly joy  
of Peace.

'How little reck'd I, Peace, that gave respite from  
sword and flame,

Would take away from us and ours our country and  
our name;\*

\* The incident of the ballad is supposed to have taken place  
in the autumn of 1872, two years after the war, and a short  
time before the people of Alsace and Lorraine were required to  
declare their nationality.

Would seek to wring from hearts on fire with deeds of  
death and shame  
Allegiance to the King from whom the wrong and  
terror came.

'Accursèd be the Kaiser's flag that floats upon the  
Rhine,  
The double beak, the talons red with blood of me and  
mine !  
*I, call him King?* no, rather Death a thousand times  
for me :  
Alsace *is* France, Alsace to France alone can loyal be.

'Could he restore my Brothers both, my home, my  
broken limb,  
Think ye that I could call him King, and homage pay  
to him ?  
Born French, no Deutschland name for me ; France  
cannot let us go ;  
The day must dawn she shall avenge the cruel con-  
quering foe !'

By passion over-wrought, tears came and dew'd the  
maiden's cheek ;  
The bitter memory of her wrongs stirr'd grief too  
strong to speak ;  
She only said, with burning cheek and strong defiant  
glance,  
'Though ye may change our country's name, our  
country still is France.'

The brave old soldier shook his head ; he did not  
understand  
The curse the maiden of Alsace invoked upon his  
land ;  
So still, with pride, he pointed out each place within  
our ken—  
The fatal field of Gravelotte, the heights of Spicheren.



## CHISLEHURST.\*

JANUARY 15, 1873.

STRANGE episode in stranger destiny :  
Napoleon gather'd to an exile's tomb,  
Fall'n as a splendid meteor from the sky,

\* 'The interment of the remains of the Emperor Napoleon III. took place on Wednesday, January 15th, 1873, in St. Mary's Chapel, Chislehurst. For a day in English winter the season was exceptionally mild, and purple violets blossomed out-of-doors in profusion. These "imperial" flowers, brought by thousands of loving hands, literally covered the coffin when it was placed in what most of those who witnessed the impressive but unostentatious ceremony seemed to consider France could never permit to be more than a temporary resting-place.'

'What Europe will look for in these comments (of the French people), not very hopefully, and we must add, in vain, is some symptom of returning sense and awakened conscience in France herself. Having committed crimes and blunders, and having now suffered penalties, greatly beyond all example, France is anxious only to throw all the blame on the man of her choice—the man to whom, three years ago, she gave a new grant of imperial power, expressly founded on an entire approval of his policy and measures.'—*Times*, Jan. 13th, 1873.

Whose trail extinguish'd deeper leaves the gloom.  
Discrown'd, rejected ; but Misfortune here,  
With right divine, claims Pity's falling tear ;  
Whilst Death, to whom his soul in vain appeal'd  
Amidst the carnage of the battle-field,  
Gives him a grave in peace, and lays him where  
Voice cannot reach of frenzy or despair.  
Inconstant Gauls ! of you shall History write,  
Ye that fawn'd round him in his hour of might,  
What ye withheld an English Winter gave—  
A wreath of violets for your Emperor's grave.



## TO ITALY.

To Italy—over green Alps, whose fringe of fern and  
flowers,  
No longer press'd by alien hoofs, were dew'd by  
Freedom's showers.  
We gazed upon the brow sublime of glaciers gleaming  
fair,  
And pass'd unchallenged peak and gorge, free as the  
mountain air.  
What had her martyr'd patriots given, as there we stood  
to stand,  
And see the happy morning break over the smiling  
land ?  
Her children in captivity, so long in sorrow bow'd ;



Whose land was conquer'd, not their hearts ; their  
    mountains, not the cloud  
Of living witnesses that yearn'd to shake from them  
    the thrall  
Of hated despot and of priest, who cover'd with a pall  
Darker than Death's the land they loved, of olive and  
    of vine,  
And gave the Tyrant power to call their homes of  
    beauty 'mine.'  
But though her brow with thorn was bound, her heart  
    knew no defeat ;  
Beautiful 'midst her sorrow, with the chains about her  
    feet.

To Italy—oh, joyous Dawn ! how fair the morning  
    breaks ;  
The clouds roll back like thwarted foes ; the mist the  
    hills forsakes ;  
And from the pine-clothed ravines bursts to life, with  
    new-made song,  
The Adige, with its current fierce, its torrents loud  
    and strong :—  
Rejuvenated river, as thou springest fresh and free,  
Through all thy course exulting with a song of liberty,  
Free from thy Alpine cradle to the Adriatic sea !

Dawn o'er the Brenner breaking, oh, sight divinely  
    fair !  
No temple built by human hands may with these  
    shrines compare.  
Their floor, mosaic of wild flowers, enamelling the sod ;

Their pinnacle, eternal snow—the great white throne  
of God ;  
From whence, adown vast galleries and solemn tiers of  
pine,  
The voice of majesty resounds with utterance divine ;  
And streams of blessing, that reveal their pure celestial  
birth,  
Break into sprays of beauty, as they flash from heaven  
to earth,  
With such sublimity, the heart joins in the song of praise  
To Him whose thoughts are not our thoughts, whose  
ways are not our ways.

No marvel with such life and light the soul of Freedom  
springs,  
Disdaining meaner worship than the Sovereign King  
of kings ;  
So vainly hath the tyrant striven to graft a foreign  
stock,  
An alien race upon the land—the snows and glaciers  
mock  
The futile effort dust-made kings have made to bind  
the free.  
As easy raise the mountain range as alter Heaven's  
decree ;  
As easy stay the torrent's course, that down the  
mountain's side  
Thunders with unresisted force to swell the ocean-tide ;  
As easy thaw yon piles of snow, or change the floods  
to flame,  
As here enforce allegiance to a tyrant's hated name.

Whom God hath given so fair a land, how can they  
choose but see  
It shall alone an appanage to heaven-born Freedom  
be ?  
For this the valleys sing with joy, the waterfalls  
rejoice ;  
Italia roused from shore to shore hath heard the  
Sovereign Voice ;  
Responding to her children's cry, He came with  
outstretch'd hand  
To break the fetters from her feet, to liberate her land.

The boasted Quadrilateral in vain against the sky  
Uprear'd its frowning bastions, its earth-works strong  
and high :  
With iron grasp long weary years the Conqueror kept  
the key,  
For which a thousand breaking hearts pined in  
captivity.  
Nor till the storm of fury burst upon Napoleon's throne,  
Had God reveal'd to Italy how she should take her  
own ;  
That till the latest hour of Time her sons should  
understand  
How impotent Man's power against the strong De-  
liverer's hand.  
Not Garibaldi's crimson shirts, nor tramp of conquering  
host,  
Not Cavour's diplomatic pen recover'd Freedom lost.  
To the brave soldier's yearning heart that glory was  
denied ;

The hour had not yet dawn'd for which Mazzini  
martyr died:

A stronger voice than patriot-tongue, from mountain  
to the sea

Declared to nations upon Earth when Italy was free !

From Tirolean heights we pass'd, to fall with sudden  
bound,

From river-gorge, and crags severe, into enchanted  
ground—

Into the lap of luxury, the land of corn and wine,  
The fertile plains of Lombardy, garlanded with the vine.  
The skies had gather'd deeper blue : beneath the  
sun's fierce glow

Melted the phantasies of morn like palaces of snow.  
But now, if river, mount, and grove, had vanish'd far  
from sight,

Lo ! on our ravish'd vision fell a new and strange  
delight ;

For Venice, with her mosque-like fanes, rose from a  
waveless sea :

Her water-streets, her marble walls, song-hallow'd  
haunts to me.

There Shylock's famed Rialto spann'd the deep before  
mine eyes ;

There shot the sombre gondola the darken'd Bridge  
of Sighs—

The bridge where Byron stood and sang to men the  
deathless song—\*

With poet's frenzy prophesied the awful doom of wrong.

\* 'Childe Harold,' Canto IV.

The dogeless palace frowneth still in all its gloomy  
pride,  
Its prison and its palace-walls still springing side by  
side ;  
But now no longer round St. Mark's\* the mailed  
sentries pass ;  
Free from the Kaiser's grasp, behold the gallant steeds  
of brass.  
Where pointed Austria's shotted guns along the sombre  
square,  
The flower-girls' song of Italy floats on the evening air.  
Fit place Mazzini's dust to shrine, whose spirit soars  
above,  
To raise in yet a higher key the deathless strains of  
love.  
O hallow'd spot, where he but saw corruption and  
decay,  
We breathe the resurrection-life of Liberty to-day :  
Yea, we behold the splendour dawn the Exile yearn'd  
to see,  
Venice restored to Italy, the Bride of Ocean, free.  
Float out, fair tricolor ; your folds kindle a thrill of joy,  
Green, white, and red, and over all the cross of brave  
Savoy—  
Fair emblems of your stainless snows, and glowing  
emerald plains,

\* The basilica of St. Mark, the tutelary Saint of Venice.  
Here is placed what would appear to be only a temporary tomb  
containing the mortal remains of Giuseppe Mazzini : it bears the  
inscription—'Waiting for the propitious day : a more fitting  
monument can be found.'

And blood that hath not flow'd in vain from many a  
martyr's veins :  
Green fields, white snows, and martyrs' blood, the  
glory and the loss,  
The joy of Liberty regain'd through Suffering's bleeding  
Cross.



## THE IMPROVISATRICE.

FAIR Helen mourn'd disconsolate,  
For she had tempted peril strong  
By wedding ere she loved : too late  
She reck'd the loss, and wail'd the wrong.

The orange-blossoms scarcely fell  
From wither'd garlands of the Bride,  
When grew she conscious of a spell,  
The more desired the more denied.

O glamour of a fading face,  
O passing smile, beguiling lip ;  
Not, not by ye the soul finds grace,  
When yearning for companionship.

A fairer light its ray must lend,  
However bright the day-star rise :  
On every life some shades descend,  
Some clouds must stain the heavenliest skies.

Love shineth once on every life ;  
But woe to him whose darken'd sight,  
Blinded by glare of worldly strife,  
Mistakes the false for the true light.

As when in summer grows the air  
Close and oppressive, till nor leaf  
Nor flower but seems wrapt in despair ;  
So silent gather clouds of grief.

Long ere the lightning slips the cloud,  
Or roll the muffled thunder peals,  
The soul with sense of dread is bow'd,  
The heart impending terror feels.

Thus day by day a stifling sense  
Of disappointed, broken trust  
Bore its first fruits of grief intense,  
Of Dead Sea apples fall'n to dust.

It may be, had one sign been given,  
One common joy these hearts could share,  
The bitter feeling had not risen  
From cold indifference to despair.

The dreams of 'all that might have been,'  
Like mists of earthly vapour rose,  
And wider, deeper roll'd between  
Their lives a gulf that darkly flows.

This was the consciousness that stole  
O'er heart of Husband and of Wife ;  
While each deplored the loss of soul,  
And wail'd the barrenness of life.

Unutter'd grew the thought at first ;  
Words linger'd long ; lips curl'd reveal'd  
Their scorn, until in fury burst  
The taunts of passion long conceal'd.

Too proud to answer word for word,  
Her bosom heaved ; but sob nor tears  
Betray'd emotion strong, that stirr'd  
Her soul with thoughts of by-gone years.

Speech to her aching heart denied,  
Statue-like stood she—pale as snow—  
Cold as Niobe petrified  
By the stern apathy of woe.

She from his angry presence fled—  
The sense of utter helplessness  
Writhed around hope and pleasure dead,  
She yearn'd for some still voice to bless—

The still small voice, consuming need  
Of human hearts, for which the cry  
Pierces the mercy-seat, to plead  
With God for Love eternally.



Then rose sweet sounds, as from a shore  
Of desolate rocks and troubled seas,  
The while her fingers trembled o'er  
Her spinet's well-worn ivory keys.

Her very soul seem'd pleading there  
For Heaven's forgiveness for her error :  
Anon the strain wail'd like a prayer,  
Then quiver'd as in speechless terror.

The weird-like agony, that swell'd  
In rushing tones of kindling chords,  
A moment seem'd to have dispell'd  
Grief that had grown too great for words.

For then wild, tender symphonies,  
As if she some far hope descried,  
Darted like bird-songs through the trees,  
And then in saddest sorrow died.

'Twas at this moment, with a start,  
She saw his darken'd frown no longer ;  
Her quivering notes had touch'd his heart  
With something than compassion stronger.

Their glances met : first on their sight  
Gleam'd the soul's star, betraying never :  
Love smote the tender chord with might,  
And MUSIC made them one for ever.

## ROSENHEIM RELICS.\*

## I.

Busy as little children, on the shore,  
Gathering sea-weeds on paper leaves to spray,  
To cherish them as relics when no more  
They share the pleasures of this sunny Bay,  
Memory garners to her store such flowers  
As will not perish with the passing hours :  
With ravish'd ear she listens ; sea and streams  
Lull with their music Life's unquiet dreams.  
And whilst the waves their symphonies impart,  
Their sacred tune winds weird-like round my heart,  
That by-and-by should Time or fell Disease  
Darken mine eyes, or cloud life's happiness,  
Remembrance of these happy summer seas  
Shall soothe my soul, and make its sorrows less.

## II.

In this fair garden I have known delight  
Long stranger to my soul. Is it the sight

\* The quasi-Sonnets numbered under this title were written during a pleasant summer sojourn in the undercliff of the Isle of Wight, at a pretty cottage called 'Rosenheim.'

Of rock and sea, or green arbutus bowers,  
Or this delicious scent of myrtle-flowers,  
That wakes the blissful consciousness, that here,  
Spirit of Poesy, thou dwellest near?  
Yea, in this quiet garden, far away  
From the vast troubled sea of human life,  
The petty jealousies, the meaner strife,  
The grasp for sordid gains from day to day,  
Thou comest, mystic Spirit : once again,  
I hear the sweet enchantment of thy strain,  
And I rejoice as if some awful dread,  
Some heavy stone, had roll'd from joys long mourn'd  
as dead.

## III.

How shall I woo thee, lest thou shouldst depart,  
To leave thrice desolate my yearning heart?  
Unfeign'd devotion must, I know, be thine;  
For he who worships Nature, to the shrine  
Of Beauty, Purity, and Peace must bring  
No half-divided reverence. To sing  
Aright her praises, he himself must be  
In harmony with cloud and wind and sea;  
And through her consecrated haunts must stray  
With meek humility and trusting grace,  
Ready to greet her purest angel's face,  
Nor cast the slightest shadow in the way:  
With eyes undimm'd by earthly mists that rise,  
And ears to hear the echoes of the skies.

## IV.

So calm the Sea, the very ships they seem  
Asleep on their own shadows, in a dream  
Of perfect restfulness, as if no gale,  
No storm, had ever battled with a sail ;

And I seem drifting on a waveless sea  
To-day, almost as still. I half forget,

In this sweet swoon of summer holiday,  
The cares with which our little lives are set —  
All future dread eclipsed by present bliss.  
Awhile I cease e'en contrasting with this  
The happy haven promised to the blest,  
Where the life-weary find eternal rest.  
I think not of a Refuge *to be* given ;  
To me, almost this seems enough of Heaven.

## V.

Thou, glorious Ocean, to my soul thou art  
God's grandest Poet ; never Minstrel's rhyme  
Wound such sweet melodies about my heart—

In calm so holy, in thy wrath sublime.  
Thou sway'st my spirit with resistless powers  
Unknown to other elements. Earth, air,  
Sun, moon, or stars, forests or woodland flowers,

Beside thee nothing can inspire such prayer :  
Memory thou loosest with her potent spells ;  
From earth which grows, alas ! so full of graves,  
Thou woorest grief, wasted on life's farewells ;

For voices of the Dead beside thy waves  
Grow audible, and spirits gone before  
Seem to talk with me from a distant shore.

## VI.

The forests fade, the river-beds are dried ;  
Stars fall from Heaven, and lightnings from the skies ;  
Love-light dies out from dear departed eyes ;  
Day passes into night, man to the grave ;  
His iron structures perish with the rust  
Of Time, nor add an atom to the dust.  
Nothing created doth like thee abide,  
Thou ever-glorious rolling Ocean-tide.  
Thy flowers and shells, by countless tempests cast  
From hidden depths of thy exhaustless store,  
Leave thee no relics of a joyous Past,  
No lost or ruin'd beauty to deplore.  
Of God's Eternal Love type shalt thou be,  
Till thou art lost in Heaven's Infinity.

## VII.

God's spirit seems upon the Deep to move,  
Making the Ocean dearer to my love ;  
But with no shadow of irreverence,  
Viewing such depths of boundless Providence,  
I cannot chase away one vague regret,  
That to the Sea there is a boundary set ;  
That in the home of Angels there may be  
So much from Earth beloved, but 'no more sea.'\*  
Through Time, but not Eternity, the soul  
May listen ravish'd to its music roll ;  
Is this the secret of the monody  
By which its water ceaselessly appeals  
From the dread doom Apocalypse reveals :—  
Place for all else in Heaven, but none for thee ?

\* 'There was no more sea.'—Revelations, xxi. 1.

## VIII.

O thou that lovest the blue waves, the thought,  
Alas ! for thee, with sorrow deep is fraught.  
In Heaven there shall be no more sea ; and yet  
Sweet consolation mingles with regret :  
The God of perfect Love, we feel and know  
Shuts out from Heaven no joy that could bestow

To one bright Angel purer ecstasies.  
Doubtless He hath created some delight,  
So far transcending every human thought,  
That till the light of Paradise is caught,

And God our sin-dimm'd vision purifies,  
Would with its splendour blind our finite sight ;  
Yet am I lost in wonder, what can be  
Such joy to angels as to men the Sea !

## IX.

Shelter'd from all the storms which have arisen  
To break upon the bleak rocks of Despair,  
I found this House of God, this gate of Heaven,  
This blessed Sanctuary \* for praise and prayer.  
There on the Lord's Day came a Voice to me,  
Still as the Summer-wind that calms the Sea,

Soothing my spirit with an anodyne  
Which it hath vainly sought in fever'd strife  
For what are falsely call'd the gains of Life,

Touching parch'd lips with chalice full of wine  
Press'd from the 'grapes of God ;' and this it said,  
In these sequester'd glades seek not the Dead,  
But find, instead of grave-clothes cold and sere,  
Memorials of the robes that Angels wear.'

\* Bonchurch.

## X.

Now hath the Day exhausted all its bliss,  
And Night steals forth with saintly aureole  
Of starry splendours, with a holy kiss  
Of peaceful benediction to the soul.  
The Moon, so far all earthly dreams above,  
Over the palpitating depths of Love  
Spreads on the Sea a glorious pathway, meet  
To bear the joy of Angels' soil-less feet.  
Between the pauses of the waves and wind  
I hear their voices, that in vain the mind  
May yearn to catch when round our being throng  
Absorbing thoughts of mercenary cares,  
For then we cannot hear the heavenly song  
That steals about the spirit unawares.

## XI.

What gives thee, Ocean, in thy plenitude  
Of beauty and of power, such mighty thrall  
Over the hearts of men? However view'd,  
Asleep in calm, or when pervading all,  
With solemn voice thy foaming billows roll,  
From thy unfathom'd depths thou seem'st to call  
With passionate emotion to my soul,  
Never to weary of her mission given—  
To front with earnest brow the stars of Heaven;  
Nor pass in mind or thought, or word, or deed,  
The boundaries by the Mighty One decreed:  
With the strong sense of Destiny fulfill'd,  
Moving with conscious strength, as God hath will'd.

## XII.

Voices, like dank weeds in a chain of flowers,  
Are hoarsely speaking from the shores of Time :  
'We dare not come: dark seas, chill, dripping showers,  
May only follow footsteps stain'd by crime.  
Entreaties of the wailing wave and wind  
Wake sadder perturbations: we can find,  
Where clear seas murmur'd once, black rocks alone;  
Dishevell'd locks of sea-weed, wildly cast  
Upon the salt waves of a troubled Past;  
For us the waters make unhappy moan.'  
Poor hapless wanderer from the living Way,  
The Voice of pardon speaks, whom waves obey :  
'O troubled heart, be still: on Me is laid  
The burden of thy sin; be not afraid.'

## XIII.

Bird poised aloft, with snowy pinions free,  
Blanch'd by the gleaming fresh white Ocean foam,  
Hast thou discover'd in some far-off home  
The rest thou canst not find upon the sea?  
May-be the glances of thy piercing eye  
Descry some buried treasure of the deep,  
And thou no longer canst the secret keep  
Of hidden grottoes in that water-world,  
By shell and flower and sparkling gems impearl'd;  
Or may-be only from some Ocean grave,  
Bright disembodied spirit of the Wave,  
Thou wing'st thy flight, to plead with brooding clouds,  
Lest they too soon should loose the gathering Tem-  
pest's shrouds.



## DE PROFUNDIS.

OUT of the depths of Christ's divine despair  
Was wrung the cry, ' Let this cup pass ;' but no :  
Though God the Father heard His one Son's prayer,  
He answer'd not His supplication so :  
But He reveal'd to Him an angel's form  
Who strengthen'd Him in agony, to bear  
The Cross that cast its awful shadow there.  
O Sailor, crying God would lull the storm,  
O Soldier, call'd to lead some Hope forlorn,  
O weary Heart by some great sorrow torn,  
Think not thy prayer goes up unheard, unblest,  
If answer'd not the way thou thinkest best ;  
Receive the lesson of the Cross and Pain—  
Apparent failures shield eternal gain.



## SEPARATION.

## I.

DISTANCE divides not ; mountains, seas, not even  
The blue curtain between Earth and Heaven.  
Wild storms may rage, the white-wing'd tempest sweep  
The vast Atlantic-billows ; through the deep  
Flashes the lightning thought of love, to cheer  
Dear sever'd ones, bringing their souls so near  
The echo of each other's prayer they hear :

Where is the chasm that, from ridge to ridge,  
Man's arm hath fallen powerless to bridge?  
And yet, alas ! some Circumstance, that grows  
To vast proportions from some thin frail line,  
Eye could not see and soul but half define,  
Crueller than mountains swathed in snows,  
More surely and mysteriously apart,  
Divideth soul from soul and heart from heart.

## II.

'In death they were not divided.'

Beside thy grave, O Friend, I cannot weep  
As I have wept to-day upon a bier  
Of silent sorrow. Vain regretful tear,  
Dropt to revive the flowers that nought could keep  
From Time's destroying finger. Oh ! perchance,  
Hadst thou too lived, some strange capricious chance  
Had marr'd the glory of thy countenance,  
And made less beautiful thy parting smiles,  
Which nothing now effaces or defiles.  
I tremble when I think that even thou  
Couldst have been changed between the Then and  
Now ;  
For Death is not so cruel as the Life  
Which wrecks so many passions in its strife :  
Therefore I can but pray, God will not let  
Me speak, act, think, remember, or forget  
Aught that may ever separate from me  
Thy love, made perfect by Eternity.

## FLOWERS OF THE WIND.

EARTH hath her countless blossoms of delight,  
Of fragrant-breathing graces—mountain, hill,  
Ravine and valley, meadow, water-rill,  
Each its own natural floral favorite ;  
And the Sea hath its flowers : from ocean caves,  
Beneath the blue enamel of the waves,  
They spread their corall'd sprays of beauty rare ;  
And as in sight of Heaven these grew so fair,  
The Hand Divine that garlanded those bowers  
Would to the winds give poetry and flowers ;  
Thus from the chrysalis, the butterflies,  
With all the gorgeous splendour of the dyes  
Of their fair sisterhood of earth, above  
Were loosed, to flutter into light and love.



## THE WAVE AND THE FLOWER.

THE salt Wave tore, in passionate pride,  
A flower from its heaving breast,  
A Flower it had vow'd should be its Bride,  
And be loved by it the best.  
But it flung it in passion and pride away ;  
And 'twas borne to the shore by the salt, white spray,  
Where long a neglected thing it lay.

But the Flower, though it pined on the dreary shore,  
Said, 'Surely the tempest will soon subside,  
And I shall return to the Wave once more ;  
I shall yet, I shall yet be its Bride.'  
The storm-wind ceased, and the western breeze  
Wafted from emerald fields and trees  
A mantle of green to the Summer seas.

Gaily the waters danced up in the light,  
With a heartless murmur of pride ;  
And the Sea-flower heard the songs of delight  
Of the ebb and the flowing tide ;  
It heard with sweet hope the Wavelet flow,  
But fainted to see it faithless go,  
And it died, a death of Promethean woe.

For, alas ! the Wave was as false as fair,  
And the Flower as true as could be ;  
For the nymphs say, this was its dying Prayer—  
'Could I kiss but the hem of the sea,  
The hem of the emerald robe of the Wave,  
Oh ! then would my sickening heart grow brave,  
And with joy I should find in its arms a grave.'

But the proud Wave scorn'd this last request  
And the love that would not decay,  
Till the Wind came swiftly out of the west,  
And wafted the Flower away.  
Then the Wave, when it found the fair one fled,  
On the pebbles and shells its salt tears shed,  
And mourn'd with a wailing cry for the dead.

And the Wave to the strand returns never more  
Without a wail of pain ;  
For in vain it beseeches the desolate shore  
‘To give back its Bride again !’  
In vain doth the Wave a dirge intone ;  
In vain doth it still for the dead make moan :  
The Lost to a truer heart has flown.



#### TO THE SPIRIT OF SONG.

As the Lark from the dew-freshen'd clover,  
Unable its song to restrain,  
When the sweet breath of Spring passes over  
The daisy-strewn meadows again ;  
So over my soul, thou fair Spirit,  
I yearn for thy breathings once more,  
That I, like the bird, may inherit  
The instinct to sing and to soar.  
For now I would sing such a lyric  
Of passionate, love-thrilling powers,  
That lives, sad and drear, by my music  
Should blossom with Hope's fairest flowers—  
Such flowers as were planted in Eden  
Ere sin stain'd Humanity's breast,  
Such flowers as the Angels of Heaven  
Still plant in the souls of the blest.



## GENÈVE.

FAIR first gem of Switzerland, lovely Genève,  
One glance at thy beauty woke love at first sight,  
And the spirit of song, chill'd so long by the grave  
Of dull faded fancies, sprang forth to thy light ;  
For I saw by the flash of thy sapphire-bright sky,  
When travel-stain'd, journey-tired, welcomed by thee,  
Revealings of promise and peace, such as eye  
Hath not seen or heart known upon mountain or sea.

Such satisfied longing ! ah ! this was the spell  
Surrounding the cool deeps of Leman's blue lake.  
That, when I have bid all its glories farewell,  
Its wavelets will still upon memory break.  
I shall see the bright vision again and again,  
The purple repose of the Juras that eve,  
When with earth's best beloved, free from sadness or  
pain,  
I first *felt* thy beauty, O lovely Genève !

But what were the joys of that blissful repose,  
To the raptured surprise that with morning awoke,  
When the sun-splendours, streaming o'er limitless snows,  
From the glories far off on the lake treasures broke ;  
For I gazed on Mont Blanc, with his satellites crown'd,  
Through golden cloud-doors gleaming white through  
the sky ;  
And my soul with the spell was in ecstasy bound,  
At this glimpse of the courts of GOD's presence on high.

And the zephyrs, which fresh from the snow-crystal  
caves,  
From those ladders of light stole so noiselessly down,  
Just to touch with a sunbeam the glistening waves,  
And wipe the dew-tears from the roses half-blown;—  
Oh ! the snows of thy lilies, thy murmuring streams,  
The swallows that dimple the lake with their kiss,  
And dart like bright thoughts through the happiest  
dreams,  
Will mingle for ever in visions of bliss.

I shall hear the deep voice of the swift-rushing Rhone,  
In Memory's mirror shall see its green isles,  
Long after the lilies and roses are gone,  
Which fringed the blue waters with beauty-bright  
smiles.  
And this thought will find echo when Doubt dims the  
sight,  
To take at Life's parting some gloom from the  
grave,—  
The rest-place remaining for future delight  
Is even more lovely than thou, fair Genève.



THE RHONE.

'WHERE art thou rushing, O rapid Rhone,  
With mystic music all thine own?  
In the clear still depths of Leman's Lake  
Canst thou no rest from thy wandering take?'

The River answer'd: 'In snow-fields born,  
By the gleaming glacier, Gerstenhorn,  
Ye may hear my foster-mother's call  
In storms round the frozen waterfall.

'Rock'd in a cradle of snow and rain,  
I rest not till I return again:  
The placid Lake hath no charm for me,  
Like the heaving breast of the far-off sea

'From mountain torrents I gather force  
Nor wind nor tide may stay my course;  
Moon and star-beams in vain weave charms,  
Flowers from my banks stretch fairy arms.

'I draw my hue from the blue of Heaven,  
Purer than ever to river was given:  
But terror of soiling the snows of birth  
Hurries my waves from the stains of earth.



' Chains for me man in vain would forge ;  
The mountains leave me an open gorge ;  
By castled steep, by crowded town,  
I rush to the heart of the Great Unknown.

' I haste to the deeps of the far-off goal,  
To quiet the dread of a storm-beat soul :  
I would a tribute stream deliver,  
Pure as the spirit of the Giver :

' That in the ocean of His Love,  
In the great sea's heart with the blue above,  
My waves may far from Earth's tear-wet sod  
Be drawn by the sunbeam's again to God.'



### THE FLOWER-PAINTER.

A SONG for fair Julie I sing, for the sake  
Of searchers for flowers by Leman's bright lake :  
Pure blossom herself, less of Summer than Spring,  
A maidenly, womanly, winsome thing.

The charms of fair Julie are felt more than seen,  
Her quiet demeanour, the grace of her mien ;  
And in the clear depths of her soft loving eyes  
Unconscious the spirit of modesty lies.

But Julie lives not, in her beautiful home,  
A life without meaning ; for strangers who roam  
By Leman's blue waters soon learn to rejoice  
In the musical welcome that sounds from her voice.

A form and face fitting to fill such fair bowers,  
Which her spirit pervades like the sweet scent of  
                  flowers ;  
Whilst, with delicate grace of pure matronly cares,  
She entertains angels, maybe, unawares.

Or some fairies perchance from the Juras have come,  
And, finding the blessing she brings to her home,  
Endow'd her with gifts of such marvellous powers,  
To strew on the canvas their own Alpine flowers.

As she turns o'er the blossoms whose hues she had  
                  caught,  
Their histories bring to her heart happy thought  
Of the spots on the mountains, where, fed with the dew,  
The gentian, the snowdrop, and blue scilla grew ;

And of summer-bright tints of the glad blossom born  
In the gay harvest-field, 'mid the high-standing corn ;  
And of grasses that wave in fantastical spray,  
Where their sisters the ferns in the waterfalls play.

She has learnt where to find them ;—at touch of her  
                  hand  
Their smiles on her canvas with new life expand,  
And 'neath the soft light of her bright loving eye,  
A charm scarce seems wanting she cannot supply ;

For, grouping their graces with exquisite art,  
She borrows what Nature best loves to impart ;  
And, learning the secrets their sinless lives tell,  
She throws round each picture the joy of her spell.

Fair Julie, Heaven grant thee, in this world of ours,  
The joy to discover for ever fresh flowers ;  
And when Love's passion tendrils thy fond heart  
entwine,  
The light of God's blessing surround thee and thine !



### THE ARVE.\*

WEIRD is the valley of Chamounix  
When midnight shadows fall :  
The crescent moon but an hour ago  
Was spiked on its glacier wall.

Her broken beam shot a farewell gleam  
Over the peaks of snow,  
The Aiguille's lofty riven sides,  
And the Mauvais Pas below.

There is only a sense of mighty forms  
Of mountain phantoms nigh,  
For the light of the stars in shadow drapes  
The pillars of the sky.

\* The traveller in Switzerland cannot fail to notice the strong contrast between the grey chalk colour of the Arve and the clear blue waters of the Rhone.

The village sleeps—the slumbering guides,  
And weary travellers, staunch,  
In quiet dreams the haunting dread  
Of fall and avalanche.

But a sound goes forth like the roar of pines  
When the storm-winds sweep Flégère :  
'Tis the voice of Arve, whose rapids roll  
A dirge, as of deep despair,—

Like a troubled spirit rushing by  
The bridge with resistless force,  
Pallid with rage at the turbid stain  
It bears from its mystic source ;—

Impure, from the womb of the mountain-gorge,  
Born of some dread crevasse,  
Maybe of the stiffen'd, frozen waves  
Of the motionless Mer de Glace.

O River ! is then thy wild unrest,  
And thy voice of ceaseless rage,  
Wrung from the sense of blemish'd birth,  
With a grief thou wouldst assuage ?

Knowest thou not in thy troubled course,  
Thou wilt find on thy way to the sea  
Thy sister river, whose limpid wave  
Is the mirror of Purity ?

And Purity flows to the shining Sea,  
Whose salts purge every stain  
Of sinful birth, corrupted earth,  
Begotten or self-wrought pain.



## BAUMGARTEN.

HALF hidden in a gallery of pines  
A chalet nestles on a sunny slope,  
And so set up amidst the leafy glen,  
A distant view awoke the pleasant thought :  
Here hath some mountain eaglet made a nest,  
Or forest wood-nymph finds a fairy home.  
Skirting its sides stand poplar sentinels,  
Whose rustling branches to the passing clouds  
Seem ever whispering solaces of home  
In half-articulate music : to the south  
Lie meadows heap'd with blue-flower'd aftermath ;  
And far beyond, the mountain range of snow ;  
Though the sun burns as from a fiery shield,  
Lighting the fair face of the Thuner See,  
And spreading o'er its deeps an amorous glow.  
Bold stands the massive Niesin, towering high  
Over the stainless wastes of Blümlisalp,  
And Stocken's stately castellated keeps ;  
And from the Wild' Frau's alabaster brow  
Descends the ice-cool zephyr, fresh and pure,  
Dimpling with virgin kiss the sleeping lake,

Wafting Baumgarten its life-giving breath.  
Northway an orchard lies, laden with fruits,  
Apples of gold with cheeks of rosy hue,  
And plum-groves dropping with imperial bloom.  
An avenue of plane, with clear-cut leaves,  
Breaking the bondage of the worn-out bark,  
And through the new-form'd summer silver skin  
Absorbing solar heat and wholesome air,  
Leads through two terraces hedged in with vine  
And yellow tendrils of wistaria,  
Broken anon with myrtles, and again  
Bound by the trumpet-flower'd convolvuli,  
In which the bees, as in some fairy hall,  
Brood over honey'd surfeits in delight.

A nearer glance reveals a homelier view  
Of garden, rockeries in quiet nooks,  
Moss-grown and lichen-cover'd ; here and there  
Broken with flecks of blue lobelia,  
And ribanded with red geranium,  
Round which the butterflies, my Boy's delight,  
Flutter like happy thoughts about the flowers,  
From which they seem to gather the bright hues  
Which dye their wings, as poets gather songs  
From smiles of Beauty, wheresoe'er she weaves  
The varied woof of her resistless charms.  
Here lie discover'd shaded bowers of green,  
Hung now with berries, summer's coral beads ;  
In spring-time laden with the milk-white bloom  
Of sweet syringas, over which again  
The golden splendours of laburnum fell.

Dear, happy homes of merle and nightingale,  
Whose songs by day and night make life appear  
(Before the passion-glow of fierce Desire  
Withers the freshness of the heart's first blooms)  
One long eternal dream of happiness.  
Here, in the sultry July afternoon,  
I revel in the shade, with ravish'd ear  
Catching at intervals the lulling sound  
Of falling water from a sparkling fount,  
Dashing its diamonds in the sun's love-glance,  
And falling o'er the ferns with cooling plash  
To find a rest in heaven-reflecting pools,  
In which the golden carp rejoice, who live  
Under a floating, fragrant firmament  
Of lily-leaves, rooted in calm, pure deeps,  
Made by first meeting of two mountain streams.  
In this fair bower I find my 'Lily-flowers,'  
A happy trio, with hearts full of song,  
And voices blending memories of Love  
With pleasant music, and the rippling laugh  
Of haymakers knee-deep in fresh-mown grass.

Fair garden-bower for summer holiday !  
Sufficiently removed from busy life  
To make the curious red roofs of the town  
Just visible through vistas cut in limes,  
The wooden bridgeway o'er the boiling Aare,  
The quaint five turrets of the church and schloss  
(The church and schloss, protectors against foes  
Within, without, spiritual, temporal),  
More to resemble some old Master's dream

Sketch'd upon canvas, than a moving scene  
Instinct with life of breathing joy and care.

Then by a path circuitous, through lawns  
Dappled with roses, down the mountain-side  
Banking the sea-green waters of the lake,  
A terrace stretches ; drest with scented lines  
Of citron, orange, fruit and bud at once,  
Born the same moment on the same green branch,  
Forgetful seemingly of age or youth  
In such a sunny paradise of flowers.  
Pomegranates here put forth their coral buds,  
And oleanders, with rich almond scent,  
Mingle their odours with fresh jasmine buds,  
White as the swans, whose snowy feathers press  
With love-emotion this endearing lake.  
Here, too, I love to watch the great white clouds  
That wander up the massive mountain-slopes,  
Discovering how the shadows of the skies  
Are form'd of vapour rising from the mounds,  
The graves of human hopes, cradles of storms  
And passionate rains, which break the peaceful calm,  
The quiet of the garden of the soul—  
Or rising far above the mists of Earth.  
Purified, glorified, like Angel-forms,  
Swathed in the spotless robes of light and love,  
Pass and re-pass before the gates of God.





## MOUNTAIN SONG.

In the wild mountain-valley bold Terence and Jacques  
Have built a snug chalet far up from the Lake ;  
And when the snows melt with the Spring's first warm  
    rays,  
They make their abode there through all the long  
    days.

Ye would think theirs the loneliest lives ye could find,  
And wonder what tie to these mountains could bind  
The strong Switzer lads, who in tending their flocks  
Find the same round of toils in this valley of rocks.

Yet when o'er the Jungfrau gleams brightly the morn,  
Ye will hear the first blast of their weird Alpine-  
    horn ;  
And the Gemmen-Alp rings with their musical voice,  
When their snatches of song make the echoes rejoice.

Ah ! surely, though late in the long sultry day,  
The sunbeam will find even here its lost way,  
Will warm into crimson the bright Alpen-rose,  
And spread o'er the snow-fields its rich afterglows.

So into the heart of each strong mountaineer  
The spell that enthalls the best hopes finds them here,  
And follows wherever their footsteps may roam  
'To gather Life's Edelweiss—love-dreams of home.

For down in Beatenberg two pairs of eyes  
Give light to their lives bright as stars to the skies,  
And only for them will these brave lads forsake  
Their home in the mountains to dwell by the Lake.



## BEFORE THE JUNGFRAU.

How shall we pierce the mists of human doubt,  
And pass the cramping creeds imposed on mind ?  
Shall we for ever, worshippers without,  
Never the Holy 'midst the holiest find ?  
Ascend the mountain-pass, the tear-wet glen,  
And gauge the insignificance of men :  
From dark-brow'd sophists, like the fir-fringed range,  
Whose hues with every shifting shadow change,  
Behold the eternal snow-peaks glorified ;  
They seem pure souls absolved from sin and pride.  
And listen ! far, where footstep never trod,  
The avalanche speaks now alone with God ;  
And on my soul a still small echo falls,  
That every sceptic thought of Heaven appalls.



## MEMORY.\*

WHENCE, Memory, cometh thy mysterious powers,  
Unseen, unnoticed ! sounds of wave and wind  
Wake voiceful echoes in the restless mind ;  
Some cloud of Heaven that bears incipient flowers  
In iris splendours, while the soft rain falls,  
Bright forms of sister-flowers of Earth recalls.  
All sense conspires to weave the subtle spells  
Of Memory. Music wakes farewells,  
Or dreams of happy meetings ; from bright eyes  
Flashes the light divine by which we see  
A vision of some earthly Paradise,  
Some green oasis blest by Memory.  
But, more than sights or sounds, sweet odours give  
The spirit sense of thy prerogative ;  
For I can never those delights inhale,  
Scent of syringas or the jasmine pale,  
But comes the same fair vision, far from home,  
A sunny picture of a day in Rome :—  
Borghesi Palace gardens gleaming fair  
With myrtle flowers and ilex, and the air  
Perfumed with violets ; while I see the bloom  
Freshen again on Keats' and Shelley's tomb  
Beneath the Aurelian wall, where gentle hands  
Strew sweet memorials of their native lands ;  
That spot so fair, such azure skies above,  
Almost with Death the heart might fall in love.

\* 'Nothing calls up associations so quickly and certainly as a sudden scent of flowers coming and going upon the summer air.'  
—*Quarterly Review*, vol. cxlix. p. 356.

## WATER-LILIES.

PRESS'D to the bosom of the streams,  
Or on the moonlit lake asleep,  
The water-lilies lull'd in dreams,  
Doat o'er the music of the deep.

But I have seen the floods descend,  
And sweeping down the mountain's side,  
Enough their snowy leaves to rend,  
Yet clung they closely to the tide.

But when the winds with wild unrest  
Bore down the stream the yellow leaf,  
Wither'd upon its moaning breast,  
Chill fell the rain, like tears of grief.

Thus are they symbols of that flower,  
The gem of glory to the earth,  
Which, scenting youth's ambrosial bower,  
In Paradise receives its birth.

It floats upon the stream of Time,  
As of the stream the fairest part ;  
Ethereal, beautiful, sublime :  
'Tis LOVE, the Lily of the Heart !

But Winter, with the name of Death,  
Comes in the dark and cloudy day ;  
With noiseless steps and icy breath,  
Our fairest Lilies steals away !

Thank Heaven ! the Spring's first sunny gleam  
Mocketh the tyrant Winter's powers ;  
She gives the Lily to the stream,  
As Heaven restores the heart's lost flowers !



## TRIFLES.

## SPRING SONG.—I.

THE sunbeams flash light on the fountains,  
Released from their fetters of frost ;  
The swallow comes over the mountains,  
To seek the love-nest she has lost ;  
Wedding-favours, in music and perfume,  
Are shower'd from cloudland and tree ;  
The hawthorn puts on bridal costume,  
Apparell'd as brides should be :  
With beauty around and above me,  
How joyous existence would be !  
If I only had some one to love me,  
To make Life a Summer for me !

O Love, what is Summer without thee ?  
The larks' roundelays ring in vain ;  
The garlands of roses about thee  
Are scentless, thick thorn-set with pain :  
In vain the dew diamonds glisten ;  
In vain sings the bird on the bough ;

The sunbeams lose light, that from Heaven  
With glory should gladden me now.  
But, Love, with thy presence above me  
How joyous existence would be !  
If I only had some one to love me,  
To make Life a Summer for me !

I find not the mystical token  
Among the fair treasures of home,  
Though tones of affection unbroken  
Make music wherever I roam ;  
For hearts beating there, beat for others—  
Allegiance to one is unknown ;  
I seek not the *share* of another's,  
But one heart, one love, *all* my own.  
Oh then, with these bright skies above me,  
How joyous existence would be !  
Oh, would I could find one to love me,  
To make Life a Summer for me !

## FIRST LOVE.—II.

LITTLE angel-hearted Ella,  
Ever very dear must be  
Memory of that blissful moment  
When I first caught glimpse of thee.  
Childish fancies, sweet, ethereal,  
Clothed her with divinest grace ;  
And the sunrise of my being  
Was the Love-smile on her face !

First I saw this little Sibyl  
Where the sounds of dancing feet  
Mingled with the hum of voices,  
And with music soft and sweet ;  
But, ah ! little did I dream, that  
When she lightly pass'd me by,  
That arch Love-smile to my Spirit's  
Yearning was a blest reply !

Oh, the thought of that first meeting,  
It is Memory's pearl of pearls !  
Now as then, I dream I see her,  
With her lightly dancing curls ;  
Which were then so smoothly parted,  
'Cross her brow with so much care,  
That methought angelic fingers  
Press'd them, leaving glory there !

And her eyes in mirth and mischief  
Beam'd then with exultant light ;  
Glorious, too, the dimpled roses,  
Blossoms of the heart's delight !  
But how little did I dream then  
Of this Sibyl's mystic power,  
She who makes me date Life's morning  
From the gladness of that hour.

Yet, ah ! well do I remember  
When I ask'd my God to give  
Something more, to make Earth dearer,  
Something worth the toil to live !

Like an Angel in a vision  
I beheld sweet Ella's form,  
Bright'ning like a radiant rainbow  
O'er the dark frowns of a storm.

And a voice so softly whisper'd  
That I thought it from above,  
As of some bright Angel, speaking—  
'Go, teach Ella how to love !'  
Little, angel-hearted darling,  
She has learnt the lesson well :  
This her beaming eye betrayeth  
Better far than lips can tell !

\* \* \* \* \*

Like the young Spring, changed to summer,  
Ella smiles, and happy flowers  
At the sound of her heart-music  
Bloom round Earth's bleak wintry bowers.  
God ! I thank Thee, for that moment  
When I first saw Ella mine,  
For her omnipresent beauty  
Turns Life's Water into Wine !

I-LIKE AND I-LOVE.—III.

THERE are two little Fairies who reign upon Earth,  
Descending by grace from above,  
We know not their home or the star of their birth,  
But their names are I-Like and I-Love.



So often mistaken in nature and fame,  
Alas ! they deceive at first sight  
The hearts who imagine their blessings the same,  
And their diadems equally bright.

For I-Like can lay claim to the province alone,  
The mystical realms of the eye ;  
But I-Love claims the heart as the *kingdom* his own,  
And all other powers can defy !

I-Like, in his province, the eye (treach'rous elf !)  
Mocks those who his mandates obey,  
Like the will-o'-the-wisp, delighting himself  
In leading his victims astray.

Sometimes he will play the most dangerous freaks,  
Assuming the strangest disguise—  
With fatal snares hidden on daintiest cheeks,  
Ripe lips, blue forget-me-not eyes.

And sometimes, maybe, in the heart of a friend  
He may scatter a few pleasant seeds ;  
Which seldom were known to spring up, or to lend  
The fragrance of beautiful deeds !

For he lacketh the power to win or to wear  
The crown of triumphant success ;  
And so fickle his fancies and favours appear,  
They never can lastingly bless.

But the monarch I-Love, in his kingdom the heart,  
Is changeless in purpose and will,

And blessings his right royal virtues impart  
Are wrought with mysterious skill !

O maiden ! who now of sweet orange-flowers dream,  
Beware of I-Like and his wiles ;  
And breathe not a vow if I-Love, king supreme,  
Reigns not in your heart and your smiles.

## HIS AND MINE.—IV.

LET her be his in hours of pride, of pomp, and  
revelry,  
Whose heart is lost in the giddy whirl of mad frivolity,  
'Midst the blaze of the banquet lights, in the hours of  
dance and song ;  
I love her not for the witching glance bestow'd on the  
passing throng.

Let her be his when exultant scorn gleams from her  
eyes of blue ;  
Let her be his when her warm cheek glows with a  
strange, unnatural hue ;  
Let her be his when thoughtless words from thought-  
less lips may fall ;  
Let her be his when Folly's lamps are a-light in Vanity  
Hall.

Let her be his, yea let him caress with pride her  
jewell'd hand ;  
Let her be his who proudly walks with what the  
world calls grand ;

Let her be his when the thoughtless crowd around her  
bend the knee ;  
Let her be his ; it is not then she awakens love in  
me.

Let her be his, for the fleeting hour such joys can  
charm the heart :  
But, let her be mine when the dreams of night for the  
smiles of morn depart.  
Let her be mine, whose heart grows faint, and weary  
of hollow mirth,  
Whose spirit thirsts for loftier scenes and nobler joys  
of earth.

Let her be mine when mocking hands no fading gar-  
lands wreath ;  
Let her be mine when courtly crowds no flattering  
incense breathe ;  
Let her be mine when thoughts of night are pass'd  
for the deeds of day ;  
Let her be mine when lips take heed of the tale the  
heart would say.

Let her be mine in that holy place, to set Love's  
signet ring ;  
Let her be mine when loving hands the bridal roses  
bring ;  
Let her be mine when her spirit feels it cannot happier  
be,  
Than to rest in the home she has made in my heart,  
and to live and to die with me.

Let her be mine in the silent hour, when Angels  
    hover by ;  
Let her be mine when they alone may hear the  
    prayerful sigh ;  
Let her be mine when the smile of Heaven may rest  
    on her placid brow ;  
Let her be mine when GOD records her trusting spirit's  
    vow.

Let her be mine in the battle of Life with smiles love-  
    deeds to crown ;  
Let her be mine in the trying time when false friends  
    on me frown ;  
Let her be mine in the hour of death, to hear my last  
    fond prayer ;  
And let her be mine in the worlds of light, to love and  
    to bless me there.

## FORGIVENESS.—V.

LET us be friends—I do not dare  
    To think that we may part  
Without exchange of tear or prayer,  
    And both with sorrowing heart.   !  
I dare not think, when ere I sleep  
    I breathe a prayer to Heaven,  
That Death with noiseless step may come,  
And take one of our spirits home,  
    Ere we have each forgiven ;  
For, oh ! what woe would crush the mind  
Of him who should be left behind !

Let us be friends—wrongs of the Past  
Be they in Lethe's waters cast !  
For ere we meet, oh who can tell  
What change may intervene !  
And can we then bid each farewell,  
And know what we have been,  
Without the soul's desire, that we  
May part as we were wont to be ?  
And if we cannot all forget,  
Still may we both the Past regret ;  
And sorrowing feel, with thoughts sincere,  
We are to one another dear ;  
That we, who trusted in each other,  
Have wept, and pray'd, and striven together,  
In hours of sunshine, grief, and pain,  
Are friends, fast, true, sworn friends again !

## RECONCILIATION.—VI.

We are friends again ;—from both our hearts  
A blissful melody has risen,  
A spirit-music which imparts  
Joy to the chief of friends in Heaven !

We are friends again ;—Love's long-lost flower,  
Forgiveness, blossoms on the tomb  
Of buried griefs ;—past is the hour  
Of cruel doubts, and spirit gloom.

We are friends again, we are friends again :  
Our love knows now no dark eclipse !

False tongues have done their worst—in vain  
Fall poison'd words from perjured lips !

We are friends again ;—our hands have met :  
The broken links in friendship's chain  
By angel fingers have been set,  
For we are friends, are friends again !

## SAILOR'S SONG.—VII.

OH ! the Sailor is taught by the things of the sea  
To be truer in heart than a landsman can be ;  
In fair or foul weather as staunch as his ship,  
He laughs away fear with a scorn-curling lip ;  
For, true as the tides to the fair moon above,  
A sailor knows best how his sweetheart to love.

He careth—not he—for the voice of the gale,  
When the storm bends the mast and to shreds blows  
the sail ;  
With Truth his star-beacon winds whistle in vain ;  
He has braved them before, he can brave them again.  
So in fair or foul weather, with faith fix'd above,  
The sailor knows best how his sweetheart to love.

He watches the needle when waves round him roll,  
That steadfast, unswerving, turns true to the Pole ;  
He singles out one bright unchangeable star,  
To light him with love to the safe Harbour Bar :  
Oh ! in fair or foul weather, all treasures above,  
He keeps well in view the dear star of his love !

Through darkness he watches, with quivering lip,  
How the frail rudder keeps the true course of the ship :  
As some wee finger-tip, or some bright laughing eye,  
Will change the whole course of a life's history ;  
So fair and foul weather his constancy proves,  
And keeps his heart true to the girl that he loves.

As the sea-bird, whose white wings are blanch'd by the  
foam,  
Would pine if in forest shades doom'd to find home ;  
So, ere from his true love the sailor would part,  
Ye must first change his nature ere changed be his  
heart ;  
For in fair or foul weather, all treasures above,  
The sailor holds fast to the anchor of Love.

## PASSION-FLOWERS.—VIII.

So near, and yet so far apart,  
When I would clasp thee to my heart,  
And make thee mine for ever !  
Sweetheart, when will this life of ours  
Be blest like yon bright Passion-flowers,  
Twined until death together ?

The zephyrs round their blushes press,  
And print unquestion'd Love's caress  
Through ceaseless hours of blisses :  
My Darling, would that we as free  
Could share such sweets of liberty,  
In fond ecstatic kisses !

## SONG IX.

THE glorious morn is breaking over the purple hills ;  
Hear ye through flower-strewn meadows ring the music-  
gushing rills,  
And on the shore, and in the woods, what pleasant  
sounds are heard—  
The music of the wandering wind, the warbling of the  
bird ;  
And forth from cloud and ocean's wave a sweet voice  
sings to me,—  
' If ye loved one another, how joyous Life would be !'  
  
If, by some wondrous alchemy all sordid thought and  
deed  
Were turn'd to words and works of love, for suffering  
souls in need,  
Oh, how the mists would roll away which God's grand  
world obscure !  
How would our eyes be open'd to the beautiful and  
pure !  
How calm would rest the waters then of Life's tumult-  
uous sea !  
Yea, if we loved each other, Earth fair as Heaven  
might be !

## MY SECRET.—SONG X.

Dost ask me why, all joys above,  
I love my Love with changeless love ?  
'Tis not because her face is fair as ever I have seen ;  
'Tis not because of classic grace and beauty in her  
mien ;



'Tis not because I know on Earth no smile so dear as  
hers ;  
'Tis not because poetic thoughts her angel-nature stirs ;  
'Tis not because such buds of Hope seem always to  
expand  
Beneath the lustre of her eye and pressure of her hand ;  
'Tis not because this God-cast pearl of Love in life's  
rough sea  
Is beautiful and purer than aught out of Heaven can be :  
But 'tis because the more I love, the more she loveth  
me.

## THE TALISMAN.—XL

In Arthur's days Queen Guinevere  
Gave to her errant knight  
A token blest by kiss and prayer,  
Ere forth he went to fight—  
Some sacred scarf, some jewell'd ring,  
Some talismanic charm,  
That should the dear one's spirit bring  
In every time of harm ;  
And 'midst the thickest of the fray,  
'Midst danger gaunt and grim,  
The token of the ladye fair  
Gave courage fresh to him,  
Nerving with strength his arm and heart  
In faith to nobly act his part.

The days of true knight-errantry  
Some dream have long pass'd by ;

But rings there not throughout the world  
One long, fierce battle-cry ?  
Have we not, as the knights of yore,  
Need of some gentle charm,  
Some talismanic influence,  
To nerve both heart and arm ?  
So will I, O true-hearted wife,  
Your kiss this morning take,  
Ere to life's battle forth I go  
For mine, and your dear sake,  
Whose memory, sweet as sweetest song,  
Comes up between my heart and wrong.

## VESPER SONG.—XII.

SLEEP on, sweet angel of my love !—  
Sleep on ! for there must be  
Thy holy sisterhood above  
Now watchful over thee :  
Of angels pure, a shining band,  
To cull with many a loving hand,  
For thee, Dream-flowers of Spirit-land.

Good night ! As lilies on the stream,  
In silence smooth and deep,  
Disturb'd by no unquiet dream,  
Swathed in the moonlight sleep ;  
So may thy soul in pure delight,  
In slumber steep'd the livelong night,  
Float through the darkness into light.

## MOTHS.

MINNIE, I pity more than blame  
The moth that flutters to the flame ;  
For by its scorch'd wings I discover  
The fate and folly of thy lover,  
Who, blinded by Love's fatal heat,  
Falls passion-faint before thy feet,  
Attracted by the subtle spell,  
Despised, but loved, alas ! too well ;  
Self-immolated on the pyre  
Of irresistible desire,  
Conscious brain, heart, ay soul, must burn,  
Whene'er he to thy charms return :  
Yet in the pangs of death finds blisses  
Life would not yield but for thy kisses.



## UNREQUITED.

L.

No, there was nothing in her soul  
To slake the burning thirst of mine :  
She gave me thorns for smiling flowers,  
And water when I ask'd for wine.

And when I sued for music sweet,  
A strain of discord smote mine ears ;  
Whilst every prayer for Love's delight  
Was answer'd through a mist of tears.

We felt we dared not trust to Time  
To join our spirits as in one ;  
We felt we held no common hope,  
Or thought or joy in unison.

And so we parted, friends at least—  
Each prayerful for the other's weal ;  
For better is an hour's regret  
Than years of bitter grief to feel.

No ; there was nothing in her soul  
To slake the burning thirst of mine :  
She gave me thorns for smiling flowers,  
And water when I sued for wine.

## II.

He swept his lyre with burning hand,  
And from the mystic strings  
Sweet songs were borne from land to land,  
As if on seraph-wings  
The young, the old, the gay, the strong,  
Paid homage to the child of song ;  
But the proud spirit of the bard  
Sought love alone for his reward !

Not the loud burst of high acclaim,  
Nor flattering words of pride ;  
Not the proud trumpet-blast of fame,  
That echo'd far and wide ;—  
Not this the meed he thought to gain,  
Not this inspired the thrilling strain :

A A

But this fond hope, and this alone,—  
To win one heart to call his own.

In vain he strung bright pearls of song,  
And cast them at her feet ;  
She coldly moved amidst the throng,  
Nor cared his voice to greet.  
And though to tears he moved at will  
Admiring crowds, she, thankless still,  
In silent, loveless disregard,  
Gazed on the spirit-thrilling bard.

And though, as dear as summer flowers  
From lands afar and near,  
Came thoughts from those who felt his powers  
In voices sweet and clear,  
She stood apart—no word she breathed  
In thanks for all the flowers he wreathed.  
And so from earth, without reward,  
Pass'd up the spirit of the bard.\*



#### LILY'S SONG.

Do you think of me at home, Mother,  
In these bright summer hours ?  
Do you think of me at home, Mother,  
Among the birds and flowers ?

\* Written (1858) after a visit to Newstead Abbey, once the seat of Lord Byron.

And when the music-breathing wind  
Sweeps o'er the clover'd grass,  
Do thoughts for Lily, Mother,  
With pleasant voices pass ?

I know by this time, Mother,  
The garden must be grand,—  
The rose and red geranium  
In many a glowing band ;  
The sweet-peas climbing high, Mother,  
As I climb'd Father's knee,  
When Jasmine through our window  
Look'd in our kiss to see:

We have not many flowers, Mother ;  
But then we have the Sea,  
Which brings fresh every day, Mother,  
Its pearly shells for me.  
And every one I find, Mother,  
I wish a dazzling gem,  
That I might bind for you, Mother,  
A precious diadem.

I know you think of me, Mother,  
When most I think of you :  
Whene'er I pray, 'God bless Mother,  
The fondest of the true ;'  
Then, then I seem to feel, Mother,  
We are not far apart,  
By such dear thoughts of love, Mother,  
That flutter round my heart !

## MY BIRD.

SING, happy Bird of Paradise,  
That warblest in the ear  
When darkest grow the clouded skies,  
And life looks bleak and drear.  
Thou charmest every fear, my love,  
That haunteth heart and brain ;  
Thou makest Heaven shine clear, fair dove,  
Through phantom realms of pain.

Dear Hope, bright Bird of Paradise,  
Thy ruffled plumage gleams  
Through the dark cypress-boughs which rise  
To cloud the land of dreams.  
Soft flutterer, let me feel thy wings  
Upon my spirit beat,  
That sense of grief for earthly things  
May fade in visions sweet.

What matter though the rose-leaves fall ?  
The violets from their grave  
Spring up, and fragrant thoughts recall,  
To make the doubter brave.  
Dear Bird of Paradise ! thy notes  
The bitter buds unfold ;  
Thy song with angel-gladness floats :  
I hear the harps of gold !

I hear the messages of peace  
Breathed in the frosty air.  
Sing, happy bird ! for sorrows cease  
With thy imploring prayer ;  
And, shining through the mist of tears,  
Love-lights no longer dim ;—  
My soul, rejoiced by scatter'd fears,  
Joins thy thanksgiving hymn.



## MY FLOWER.

I KNOW a flower of priceless worth,  
Of seed sown from above,  
To light the darkness of the earth :  
'Tis thou, White Rose of Love !

O God's best gift ! O pure White Rose !  
Crown of all hopes and fears !  
Thick-set with thorns thy blossom grows,  
Water'd by many tears.

And yet without the fragrance sweet  
Thy mystic life imparts,  
What earthly joy could be complete ?  
What Heaven for human hearts ?





## SONGS OF THE ROSES.

## I.

OH ! the Spring hath its Roses—rath Primroses ;  
They shine from the sterile brake;  
And the days grow lighter, warmer, and brighter,  
For theirs and their sisters' sake—  
Their sisters the Violets, purple and white,  
On whose birthdays the wild birds sing songs of  
delight.

And Summer hath Roses—regal roses;  
And proud are their crimson smiles,  
And bright is the flush of the fragrant blush  
Of these brides of the flowers of our isles ;  
And the fountains leap up with exultant bliss  
When they dimple the streams with their perfumed  
kiss.

And Winter hath Roses—pale Christmas Roses,\*  
Dearer and fairer than all,  
Pure lily-like flowers for desolate bowers  
When the oak-leaves, wither'd, fall ;  
And I cry amidst relics of Life's decay,  
'Heaven, keep for my winter pure thoughts such as  
they !'

\* *Helleborus niger*.

## SPRING SONG.—II.

I WATCH my Roses bud and break :  
Sharp Winter frosts have cut the boughs ;  
But cruel Death could only take  
The tender hopes of last year's vows :  
For from the root I see again  
Sweet solace for the thorns of Pain.

Life hath not flown : the branches sere  
The pruning-knife will soon remove,  
And from the root new blossoms dear  
Will climb up in the light of Love :  
New joys will blossom fresh and fair—  
Fond answers to my yearning prayer.

We soon the dark days shall forget :  
The Summer of the Soul is nigh :  
I read it in the violet,  
And in the daisy's starry eye ;  
My heart, with new-found fancies stirr'd,  
Wakes with the voice of breeze and bird.

Sweet soul of Hope, dear happy Spring,  
I see thee in the children's eyes  
Mirror'd in laughters ; and I sing  
As one who finds the golden prize  
Of long desire : I breathe the breath  
Of life blown from the gates of Death !

It comes ! it floods the earth and skies ;  
The lark goes up with song to greet  
The floors of white anemones,  
And cowslips breathing incense sweet ;  
And whilst the world with Winter parts,  
Heaven finds a home in joyous hearts.

A ROSE-THORN.—III.

ONE day, in a garden of Roses  
I revell'd 'midst beauty and bloom ;  
White lilies and pure stephanotis  
Swung censers of lavish perfume :  
And stooping some charms to discover,  
Or bring some conceal'd buds in sight,  
I leaned o'er these bowers, as a lover  
Leans over his cherished Delight ;  
When a Snake made the thicket of Roses  
Convulsively shake its dew-showers ;  
As it curl'd in the locks of Medusa,  
It coil'd in the folds of my flowers.

I trembled a moment with passion,  
Then over my soul fell the dread  
Of a day, when not even false Fashion  
Survives to bring flowers to the Dead.  
The Snake, with eyes pitiless gleaming,  
Shot into my brain such a ray,  
As scorch'd all my summer-day's dreaming  
Of life-lasting pleasure away.

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For what is a Present all roses,  
Or Past which with sorrow we part,  
If snake-like a dread of the Future  
Hath seized with its fangs on the heart?

## FOR MUSIC.—IV.

FLOWERS of Joy for thee,  
Life-long stormless weather :  
Time—a waveless sea,  
Heaven reflecting ever :  
Songs of rapturous music,  
By the birds or streams,  
Or the joyous poet  
Revelling in dreams.  
Yea, with happy voices  
Let thy portion be ;  
All that Earth rejoices  
Joining hands with thee !

Flowers of Joy for thee,  
Fair of fairest faces ;  
May no grief or care  
Leave by thee their traces :  
Sunlight, round thee shining,  
Glad with fancies free,  
Angel-fingers lining  
Silver clouds for thee.

So when summer closes,  
Ere its joys decay,  
Soft as falling roses,  
Painless pass away.



### MY 'LILY.'

A SENSE of resurrection-joy pervades the happy Earth;  
The missel-thrush sings roundelays to greet the violet's  
birth;  
In vestal white the snowdrops bend to hear the soft  
west breeze  
Breathe whispers of another world among the budding  
trees:  
The rippling brook to music sets the winter's last adieu;  
And love-thoughts greet with life and light the Flower  
of Fontainebleau!

For soft as kisses fall the steps of Spring upon the  
lawn,  
And softer o'er our hearts the sense that winter days  
are gone;  
The creeping vincas in the copse have caught the blue  
of heaven,  
The primrose and the celandine bright promises have  
given:

But none of these dear favorites can win love-thoughts  
as true  
As flutter from my heart to greet the Flower of  
Fontainebleau.

The rooks upon the tall elm tops, with busy noise,  
repair  
The broken love-nests that the storms of winter would  
not spare ;  
And from the laurels flutter by, to meet the sun's warm  
glow,  
One (is it last year's ?) butterfly, white as the stainless  
snow.  
I only know, the while its wings across the leafage flew,  
It brought my heart a summer dream of Flowers of  
Fontainebleau.

I look out on a shining sea of meadows growing green ;  
The daisies break in flecks of foam as white as ocean-  
sheen :  
Forgetting separations drear at Spring's celestial touch,  
I only think of future joys and flowers we love so much ;  
But shining forth, the sunniest, in Memory's fondest  
view,  
She comes, sweet Lily of my heart ! fair Flower of  
Fontainebleau.

O tender blossom, given of God, like your own name-  
sake flower,  
Lily of love and purity, in grace grow every hour ;

Unfold your life 'midst fragrant thoughts, dear child  
of many prayers ;  
Keep pure your heart, that you may win the angels  
unawares ;  
And when from earth your smiles fade out, Heaven  
grant you will have grown  
A Lily God will not disdain to plant beside His throne !



‘TAMBOURINE.’

A LOVING old man in the garden walks,  
Lonely among the groups of flowers ;  
And now and again to himself he talks  
Of the cherish'd joy of some bygone hours.  
The thrush from the cherry-bloom blows his flute ;  
The nightingale answers away in the thorn ;  
But musical voices might all have been mute  
For aught that they gladden'd his heart forlorn.  
He walk'd, as it were, in a far-off dream,  
Away from the flower-strewn realms of green ;  
And his thoughts ran to words like a babbling stream,  
‘ Oh ! where hast thou vanish'd, dear Tambourine ? ’

Now, ‘ Tambourine ’ was a pet name given  
To the joy of his heart, Love's precious pearl ;

And 'midst the bountiful gifts of Heaven,  
Nothing he loved like that joyous girl.  
She was never a day from his thought or care ;  
Her form in his eyes was ever seen,  
And he never utter'd to Heaven a prayer  
But a chord was touch'd on Tambourine.  
Her life was music ; a tune begun  
In a key of care-destroying tone ;  
Her garrulous talk on the listener won  
With a mystical sweetness all its own.

The guelder rose with its snow-balls white,  
Laburnum weeping its golden curls,  
Woke memories woven with strange delight  
Of this lily-pure flower in the 'garden of girls.'  
Not a pale spray of thorn, not a bend of the grass,  
Not a flash of green fern from the shades of the  
lawn,  
But brought, as it were in a magical glass,  
The features and form of the precious one gone ;  
But the whole wealth of blossom, spread forth in his  
sight,  
The splendour of leafage, the pomp of the grove,  
Fell on eyes that seem'd sadly to lack their love-light :  
The flowers deck'd no longer the shrine of his love!

With a strange yearning look 'neath the jessamine  
leaves  
That clung round the gables with promises sweet,  
One casement he singled, whilst forth from the eaves  
The twittering swallows his love-regrets greet.



*She* loved them, and that was enough to endear,  
And keep their nests safe : through the long summer  
day

No wonder they flutter unconscious of fear ;  
Her love still protects them, though she far away—  
The love of a little heart beating afar,  
And yet in the world what a power divine !  
God never hath given the skies a star  
With fairer light from His heaven to shine !

And could ye but look in her empty room,  
Ye would see the same vase full of flowers which  
she left,

Ere shadows of parting had spread their first gloom  
On the home and the heart of her presence bereft.  
There is not a finger would dare to remove  
The leaves she has touch'd from what *she* thought  
their place ;

For every one feels they are sacred to Love,  
And grow in his eyes with unspeakable grace.  
Enough she has look'd on their petals with joy,  
And he thinks for her sake they so beautiful grow :  
Then who would the loving illusion destroy,  
That they owe to her sweetness the charms they  
bestow ?

O dear 'Tambourine !' ye will never know all  
The fancies that stir the old man's loving heart,  
The numberless blessings that every day fall,  
With father and daughter so near, when apart.  
Oh ! sure when she gauges the depths of his love,  
Her life can but tremble with exquisite tone ;

A glimpse of God's Fatherhood glowing above  
Will make in her bosom its sacredness known.  
For ever and ever the joy she has been  
May she be, that, whatever her destiny given,  
Should Death still the sound of the sweet 'Tambourine,'  
She will still for the old man wake music in Heaven.



## LOST LOVE.

## I.

BLOW on, wild winds, blow on, which waft  
Yon sails o'er the troubled sea ;  
And would ye could waft o'er the sea of thought  
One joy of the Past to me !

The sun that sinks in the crimson West,  
The stars in the heavens that glow,  
The smiles of the vanish'd flowers of Spring,  
For earth still come and go !

But there's a light which but once departs,  
And a flower wept o'er in vain ;  
And a star that sets in the desolate heart  
Never to rise again.

Blow on, wild winds, blow on, which waft  
Yon sails o'er the troubled sea ;  
And oh ! that your breath from the sea of the Past  
Could waft my lost Love to me !

## II.

Why haste not her feet to meet me  
    As of yore ?  
Why sounds not her voice to greet me  
    As before ?  
She is flown. Earth could not bind her ;  
In her old haunts I shall find her  
    Nevermore.

Earth has lost her—Heaven will keep her  
    Evermore ;  
And my love of Heaven is deeper  
    Than before.  
Here my grief is past expressing ;  
There my bliss and there my blessing  
    Are in store.

There the love of God will chain us  
    Evermore,  
And no loss will come to pain us  
    Any more :  
Changed, perchance, but still true-hearted,  
There we meet, and can be parted  
    Nevermore.



## SAINT ELEANOR.

FAR in the fenland Walton's tower  
Gleams a white splendour in the sun,  
Symbol of vanish'd pomp and power,  
Relic of pious work well done.

Shrine of forgotten history, where  
Find we a fragment of thy story?  
Yet round this ruin'd house of prayer  
Legends float of departed glory.

Dead memories haunt the silent aisles;  
Through flower-wrought capitals I trace  
Mysterious lines of faded smiles  
Still clothing them with mystic grace.

The stern old Saxon law declared  
Terrors of conscience, fire and sword,  
On sacrilegious hands which dared  
Despoil the temple of the Lord.

By sevenfold gifts of God endow'd,  
By seven degrees of priestly merit,  
Seven times a-day His servants bow'd,  
Adoring here the Holy Spirit.

So was Heaven's malison sevenfold  
Invoked on word or work degrading  
The shrines of worshipp'd saints of old.  
Whose names are with their glory fading.

For Saxon pilgrims proudly view'd  
This shrine, here loving, praise to render,  
When Crowland and when Thorney stood  
Not far off in their pristine splendour.

But Time mocks human law and pain,  
From man's best work the glory stealing,  
And broken pictures of the brain  
Find types in crumbling arch and ceiling.

Gone is the pomp of priest and choir,  
The silver vessels, gilded cross—  
Vanish'd with all the vague desire ;  
A vanquish'd people wept the loss.

But could these walls their secrets lend,  
What tale of unrecorded tears  
With Harold's kingly name would blend  
From the dim mist of far-off years !

From weary hearts, on which the toll  
Of the first curfew from the tower  
Wrung loyal prayers for Harold's soul,  
Bewailing his departed power.

And, beautiful 'midst forms of grace,  
That once swept through these ghostly aisles,  
Saint Etheldrida's saintly face  
Would beam bright with Madonna smiles.

The Sanctuary speaks ! I hear a sound  
Of psalm break with the organ-roll ;  
For more than Saxon here hath found  
A camp of refuge for the soul.

I came to note the builder's art,  
Lines of fair tracery in stone ;  
I knew not then the joy of heart  
To be that harvest-day made known.

For, lo ! a fair apocalypse  
Of beauty met my ravish'd gaze—  
A Saint, the chalice at her lips,  
Look'd love from eyes of prayer and praise.

Though countless days, with mute adieus,  
The sun hath through this chancel shone,  
His aureoles of saintly hues  
A fairer form ne'er gleam'd upon.

It was Saint Eleanor's, whom we,  
Ere suffering touch'd her fair young brow,  
Had call'd 'the Blessèd One,' to be  
Sevenfold to us a blessing now.

For when I met those haunting eyes,  
And calm, sweet face, composed in prayer,  
I touch'd the fringe of Paradise,  
Nor question'd Christ's dear Presence there.

So still, so pure, so self-possess'd !  
The resignation of her face  
Beam'd like a halo of the blest,  
And crown'd her angel of the place.

Strong as the 'pure in heart'—to whom  
The promised sight of God is given—  
She found 'midst thorns of pain the bloom  
And fragrance of the Rose of Heaven.

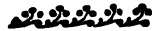
Maybe for this the martyr's crown  
Her suffering brow so long hath worn,  
That we may see God calls His own  
From faith of human weakness born.

What we in blindness deem so weak  
Grows with a strength and force divine,  
For through the frail, pale, wasted cheek,  
The Rose of Sharon seems to shine.

In uncomplaining suffering strong,  
Her heavenly smile for love appeal'd,  
 wooing the soul from thoughts of wrong—  
A new life 'hid with Christ' reveal'd.

Sweet comfort 'midst the wreck of years  
Now in this ruin'd church I see ;  
A glory brightens through my tears ;  
A Heavenly Presence beckons me.

The confidence of quiet trust,  
A hallow'd memory pure and sweet;  
Fresh flowers of God spring from the dust  
Of perish'd blossoms at my feet.



## RAIN.\*

THANK Heaven! the rain is coming down again,  
For which the lovely flowers and budding trees  
Have thirsted long, and sought till now in vain,  
Languidly swaying in the passing breeze:  
But now the wind blows softly from the west;  
Our supplications have to God arisen;  
Our prayers with gracious answers have been blest—  
The gentle rain is coming down from Heaven.

With unavailing grief we mourn'd to see  
Fruits that sustain'd us falling to decay,  
Perishing in the blossom on the tree,  
And thirsting flowers which wither'd in our way.  
With heart oppress'd, a sorrowing Poet said,  
'The young Spring, friend, will lose her maiden  
pride;  
Man's boasted strength is powerless to aid  
The blossom drooping by the hot wayside.'

\* 'Thou, O God, sentest a gracious rain upon Thine inheritance: and refreshedst it when it was weary.'—Psalm lxxviii. 9.



Thus in the rain-drops saw we Providence;  
And not alone in them—for I have known  
The clouds of sorrow hang in darkness dense  
Over a heart which felt it was alone.  
Men could not soothe the sorrows it contain'd.  
It yearn'd for sympathy's most genial rain ;  
But sad and desolate it long remain'd,  
Seeking the friendship of this world in vain.

Prayer then unlock'd the tomb of Memory,  
And secrets that the spirit would not dare  
Reveal to men, deeds of dark mystery,  
Well'd forth like streams from mountains in a prayer.  
The poisonous breathings of neglect and scorn  
Had wither'd all the fantasies of youth,  
Till in one night dawn'd promises of morn,  
The first impression of the joys of Truth.

Then fell the living rain-drops from above ;  
And as the shower refreshes earthly bloom,  
Hopes pour'd from realms of happiness above  
Gave light where all was sombre as the tomb.  
And now the wind blows softly from the west ;  
No cry of faith to God in vain hath risen ;  
And whilst with blessings all his days are blest,  
He feels they come like gracious rain from Heaven.



## SAFE.

A HURRICANE blew in the wild West Bay,  
Black waves, with deafening roar,  
Leapt up the lines of salt foam-spray,  
Spread over the storm-beat shore.

And woe to the hapless mariner,  
Who miss'd, that dark-brow'd night,  
The beacon that gleam'd from Portland Bill,  
Or the Needles of the Wight.

For, alas the shame ! 'tween Chesil Beach  
And the rocks of the Cornish coast  
A harbour of refuge none can reach,  
No matter what brave lives lost.

And who would steer in such a time,  
'Neath skies with never a star,  
To the narrow mouth of the Cobb of Lyme,  
Or the perilous Bridport Bar ?

So thus it was the *Heroine* barque  
In the Channel offing toss'd,  
A broken wreck—when sails and masts  
In the blinding surf were lost.

The skipper's practised eye could see,  
Seaward to drive 'twere best,  
Nor trust the breaker's gleaming teeth,  
Foam-whiten'd east and west.

But ere the shadows of that night  
Swept o'er the waters dark,  
The captain lash'd his little daughter  
To a spar of the drifting barque.

And the sailors tell with quivering lip  
The tale of this maiden brave ;  
Never dismay'd, though the wave-logg'd ship,  
They thought no power could save.

Her little voice, through wind and rain,  
Smote their hearts, the while that she  
Sang the children's hymn, with its prayer-refrain,  
For sailors wreck'd at sea.

For never a tear her blue eyes shed ;  
And they marvell'd much to hear  
The words she said—' I feel no dread ;  
My Father, I know, is near.'

And though long years have roll'd away,  
And many storms since then  
Have swept the waves of the wild West Bay,  
And troubled the lives of men,—

Safe, safe is the true unerring soul,  
That keeps the child's faith clear ;  
Steadfast when doubting billows roll,  
In the trust of a Father near.

A loving Father, whose pitying eyes,  
From a stormless Heaven above,  
His weakest trusting child supplies  
With strength of a deathless love.

TO ——— \*

REJOICING when the first fresh roses break  
From buds to perfect flowers in groves of Spring,  
The raptured nightingale, for their sweet sake  
Entranced, no longer may refuse to sing ;  
So on the birthday of two fairest flowers,  
Twin-sisters born as at this Christmas-time,  
A loyal laureate in their favour'd bowers  
Ventures to weave his wishes into rhyme.

May their bright eyes for many a year again  
Greet the returning blessings of to-day,  
With lives safe shelter'd, spirits free of pain,  
And troops of friends surrounding them alway.  
Nor may the Christmas chimes sound long farewells  
Ere from the belfry happier music starts,  
The joyous echo of the marriage-bells  
Ringing in blessing upon homes and hearts.

As angels in the houses they shall bless,  
May their bright kinsmen from the heavens above  
Lead them in paths of peace and pleasantness,  
Blessing and blest with pure requited love.  
May Time, whose touch as yet on form and face  
Hath left but lines of fairest loveliness,  
Year after year but add maturer grace,  
And leave on rosy lips a fond caress.

\* Twin-sisters, whose birthday falls in Christmas week.

Yea, may he ever keep their glad hearts young,  
Planting their souls with Heaven's forget-me-nots,  
Whilst through their lives Love's sweetest songs be  
    sung,  
Their homes on earth Affection's hallow'd spots.  
In quiet faith, beloved of Earth and Heaven,  
Be theirs that blessing, all good gifts above—  
The confidence God's guerdon has been given,  
Light of His Light, Joy of His Joy, Love of His  
    Love!



## SONGS OF THE HOLLY.

### I.

THE Holly-tree, the Holly-tree, the Christmas-loving  
tree!  
Its shining leaves, its berries bright, for ever dear  
must be;  
For when the frost with ruthless haste strikes dumb  
the prattling rill,  
And the winds beneath the cold starlight chant re-  
quiems loud and shrill,  
When fades the flower in field and bower, brightest  
and best above  
God's garden gifts of evergreen the holly gleams with  
love.

Type of the true for constancy, this fond, familiar  
thing ;  
Closer than ivy to the oak, dear memories round it  
cling ;  
It wakens thoughts of welcome home, of household  
hearth grown bright,  
When, though the world is bleak without, within is  
love and light,  
And merry hearts and laughing eyes, beguiled beneath  
its gleam,  
Forget the dark and dreary days, as in a summer  
dream.

The robin's breast glows crimson bright its coral  
branches near,  
And wilder, sweeter ring its notes the dying year to  
cheer ;  
And round the font and altar-rails the faithful gar-  
lands twine,  
The while a consecrated joy surrounds the leaf-deck'd  
shrine ;  
Living and dead, dear faces seem from forth its boughs  
to smile,  
When, 'Hark ! the herald angels sing !' in anthem  
floods the aisle.

Its crimson drops wake sacred thoughts of that bright  
crown of thorn,  
Press'd to the brow of Him who as on Christmas Day  
was born,

And who when earth was most forlorn came to the  
world to save  
The lost, the dying, and the dead, the darkness of  
the grave.  
By such a rosary of love God's blessings counted be,  
With songs of praise for Him who gems the Christmas  
favoured tree !

## II.

UNDER the Holly-bough  
Come gather now,  
Ye who can love with hearts true and sincere ;  
Care and its wrongs forget,  
Quenching all vain regret,  
Cheer with some blessing the death of the year.

Under the Holly-bough  
Come gather now ;—  
Phantoms of Sin and Pain hence, hence depart !  
What though through blinding snow  
Homeless the bleak winds blow,  
Summer in Winter may dwell in the heart !

Under the Holly-bough  
Come gather now ;—  
Workers of evil and sorrow, be still :  
Love joining heart and hand,  
Over a happy land,  
Ring the glad tidings of peace and goodwill.

Under the Holly-bough  
Come gather now,  
Ye who make earth seem a Paradise dear ;  
Blessing and bless'd, for ye,  
Bright through the crimson tree,  
Gleams a glad Christmas and happy New Year.



## WOUNDED.

THERE are deeper wounds than the blood-red scar—  
The crimson'd bays of the fields of war.  
In the serried ranks, fresh laurels won,  
The death-pangs cease with Duty done :  
But deadlier weapon than shell or sword,  
From lips belov'd, is the scornful word,  
A cutting jest, with its poison'd smart,  
Which bares some sore of a bleeding heart.

And 'tis lesser sorrow and pain to yield  
To noble foes in a noble field,  
Than bear the force of a covert sneer,  
Or a rash irreverent tongue to hear  
Deal blows in the dark, with sinister zest,  
Regardless what griefs be the cost of a jest.  
Oh ! to keep the heart free of the sin of such snares,  
Should surely be first in the Christ-lover's prayers !

Yea, the curse of our age is the cowardly pen,  
That drops its gall-gossip, unworthy of men ;



The vendor of half-truths—more dangerous lies  
Than outspoken falsehoods which scorn disguise,  
Reckless what sickness of soul be wrought  
So long as a cynical laugh be caught ;  
The consciousness gone of the deadly disgrace  
Of raising the blush, born of shame, to the face.

Oh ! touch of true gentleness, seraph-dower'd bliss,  
On the world's careworn brow would we felt more thy  
kiss

That falls on the spirit like dews from above,  
To water the Flowers which love us, if we love  
The word and the work, that with joy will impart  
No needless abrasions of pain to the heart :  
So careful lest crushing with feet too rough-shod  
The frail lilies strewn in Life's pathways to God.



#### L'ENVOI.

COURAGE, weak Heart, why troublest thou,  
With impotent, imperfect will,  
To bind thyself with mystic vow  
Some mighty purpose to fulfil ?

Wait patiently : the hour shall come  
When thou may'st hear the true behest ;  
The Star shall rise to guide thee home  
From wandering and unrest.

Clear when thou judgest, be thine eyes  
No longer blinded by the glare  
Of name or fame : Self-sacrifice  
Find thou the guerdon of thy prayer.

So may the deaf hear songs of bliss,  
The blind rejoice to see the sun,  
If all desire be bound in this,—  
God's will, not thine, be done.



UNTO THE END.

THOU Guardian Angel of my Life, again  
Thy loving hands have tended through the night,  
Have brought me from despondency and pain,  
Forth from the darkness into Love's pure light.

Upon my fever'd brow thy gentle hand  
Was laid with more than woman's tenderness ;  
Staying the shadows of the Silent Land,  
Which seem'd so close about my heart to press.

With noiseless footsteps moving round my bed,  
When all the world grew tired and seem'd asleep,  
Thy watchful care pillow'd my aching head,  
And woo'd the soothing anodyne of sleep.

It was thy voice, that through discordant care  
Breathed perfect chords of music, soft and clear ;  
That charm'd the demon presence of Despair,  
And woke a sense that Heaven itself was near.

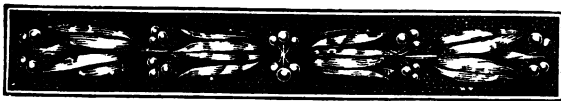
Thy smiles like star-beams light life's darkest hours ;  
My soul feeds on the love of thy fond eyes ;  
Thy presence lends fresh beauty to the flowers  
That blossom in our earthly Paradise.

No wonder, when, with half-closed eyes, I dream  
Of angels that descend the golden stair  
On God-given errands, that thy features gleam  
Brightest and best among those faces fair.

Bend near me, let me kiss thee, for I dare  
Not think how lone would be the ways of life  
Without the blessing of the gracious prayer  
That moves thy loving lips, true-hearted Wife !

I can but give God thanks for thee, and pray  
No other love, no other hands may tend  
Me in the hours of Pain ; but as to-day  
Thou wilt be mine, mine, Darling, to the end.





## HYMNS AND REST REVERIES.

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### NOËL.

**D**AY of dear memories, fair as the snow,  
Mantling with purity darkness below,  
Now let emotions of sorrow be still ;  
Hear ye the tidings of peace and good will—  
Tidings which hallow with glory the morn ;  
Jesus, the Blessèd Redeemer, is born.

Angels of Heaven join voices of earth,  
Singing sweet anthems to welcome His birth ;  
Now to our spirits salvation be given—  
Faith, that shall open the kingdom of Heaven.  
Hail with delight, then, this glorious morn ;  
Jesus, the Blessèd Redeemer, is born.

Grant, O Thou merciful Father above !  
Grant that this day be the birthday of Love !  
As the Child Jesus to darkness brought light,  
Bring to our sin-weary spirits delight :  
Let us in heart and soul sing on this morn—  
Jesus, the Blessèd Redeemer, is born !

## NEW-YEAR HYMN.

WITH new songs of Hope and of Gladness  
Come welcome the dawning new year ;  
Awaking from visions of sadness,  
Away with forebodings of Fear.  
Let the graves of the Past, with their shadows,  
No longer our spirits dismay,  
For, fresh from Hope's asphodel meadows,  
We gather new garlands to-day.

Let us lift up our souls from the sorrows  
And griefs of the year that is gone,  
In trust that more glorious morrows  
On earth with new glory shall dawn.  
Our trust in 'our Father' grown stronger,  
Our faith in His promise more sure,  
So doubt and temptation no longer  
The light of His love shall obscure.

Let us walk with more humble affection,  
And lean with more trust on His arm,  
And seek with more prayer His direction  
Who only can shield us from harm ;  
No matter what weakness deploring,  
In charity growing more kind,  
That we, the Forgiver, adoring  
Forgiveness in mercy may find.

Let us turn from all old ways of living  
Which cannot God's blessing secure,  
More loyal to Christ, more forgiving,  
Find love for the good grown more pure.  
Some days must, we know, be o'ercast here ;  
But if to His call we prove true,  
We shall find all the woes of the past year  
Submerged in the joys of the new.

If we seek Him in faith He will find us  
The every-day grace that we need,  
With Bread of Life, God's lovingkindness,  
The famishing spirit will feed ;  
With the Water of Life for souls thirsting,  
The joy of His love He will give,  
With the pledge from His sacred heart bursting,  
' Drink, drink, from this Fountain, and live !'

Oh, happy the souls He reviveth  
The dawn of another new year,  
Whom the Giver of all good gifts giveth  
His blessing despondence to cheer !  
For them the dim, dread-haunting shadows  
Of sorrow and death steal away,  
Whilst fresh from Hope's asphodel meadows  
They gather new garlands to-day.



## SOUL'S-REST.

Of all the gracious promises that stirr'd  
The hearts of men who heard Christ's accents blest,  
This surely was His most assuring word—  
'Come unto Me and for your souls find rest.'

*Rest for the soul*—they know what boon is here  
Who through long years have labour'd, but in vain,  
To find, with wasted strength, no sign appear  
Of what the spirit yearneth to attain.

By careful toil, successful effort crown'd,  
Strong hands in trust may for a moment hold  
Treasures in earthen vessels, lost and found ;  
But rest of soul eludes the grasp of gold !

Dread thought ! infirmities of age increase  
The vain endeavours of the lives of men ;  
And when the heavy-laden most need peace,  
How poor appear Earth's best possessions then !

Oh ! this was not the precious promise given—  
Not to give working hands a brief respite :  
Christ knew there was no Rest like Work for Heaven,  
Done with the single purpose — His delight.

For what He promised in a soul-given Rest  
Was no dull sensuous bourn of idle dreams—  
In some fair ivory palace to be guest,  
'Midst light of laughing flowers and sylvan streams.

Not so : the very guerdon Christ bestows  
Enjoins that work shall win the rest to be :—  
'Take ye My yoke,' and whatsoe'er your woes,  
'Ye shall find rest unto your souls,' through Me.

He did not promise rest to weary feet,  
Tired with life's journey : more, oh ! more than this.  
Rest for the soul implies—a joy complete,  
Perfect, eternal, satisfying bliss.

Oh ! never fell from lips such gracious words :  
No wonder the Great Master loved to set  
This pearl of promise with such matchless chords,  
In Music's rarest, heavenliest amulet.\*

Something surpassing Man's supremest power  
To give, or take away, is this soul's rest ;  
No soft indulgence for a fleeting hour,  
To leave the bruised spirit more distressed.

Pleasure may lead us forth, with mocking hands  
Pointing to some far splendours gaily drest ;  
May prattle of the joys of distant lands,  
And sing her raptures of unbroken rest.

Beauty may flash upon the blinded sight,  
And cause the cheek with tingling blood to glow ;  
But what succeeds her fever of delight ?  
Surely no rest of soul her votaries know.

\* Handel's 'Messiah.'



The fairest rose conceals the worm beneath ;  
The ruddiest fruit decay will hold at core ;  
The glowing cheek may hide the seeds of death ;  
The bluest wave a coral grave roll o'er.

The heart that thirsteth not for Love divine,  
Wherewith to slake insatiate dreams of Heaven,  
Findeth no joy akin, O Soul, to thine,  
To whom soul's rest with pardoning peace is given.

Rest — where the memory of pain shall be  
Lull'd by a music so enchanting sweet,  
The soul's exulting sense, of sorrow free,  
Discerns the footprints of the angel's feet.

Weariness o'er the strongest mind will creep  
Upon a day's fatigue, and eyelids close.  
Rest is no gift of thine, O Death, O Sleep,  
For dreams still rack the soul though limbs repose.

The loving hand may help the wanderer home,  
And human care may soothe the troubled brow,  
And bind the bleeding feet that weary roam,  
But leave the soul an aching void of woe.

Not unto weary hands Christ promised rest,  
To leave unsatisfied the doubting mind ;  
Not for tired feet is made a joy so blest,  
To leave, perchance, some unheal'd wound behind.

Rest for the 'body : Sleep and Death control  
Memory, that busy tyrant of the brain ;  
But both are powerless to endow the soul  
With courage meet to bear life's lingering pain.

Christ's gift is perfect—unlike human dole  
Of charity, this pure beneficence :  
For they who know His promised ' Rest of soul,'  
Know all things coveted by soul or sense.



### THE SABBATH.

#### I.

REST, O my soul ! this is the day  
The gracious Lord has given,  
Wherein His loving children may  
Foretaste the joy of Heaven.

A holy hush pervades the air,  
This rest-day of the week ;  
The very flowers, as if in prayer,  
Seem bow'd with reverence meek.

And every breath of wind that steals  
Across the leafy grove,  
Like the still voice of God, appeals  
For worship and for love.

In vain six days of work employ  
Our thoughts, if worldly ways  
Have only dull'd our sense of joy  
In this fair pearl of days.

For Labour should but sweeten rest,  
And Rest our labours leaven,  
If we would have our pleasures blest  
And keep our souls near Heaven.

II.

'In the Spirit on the Lord's Day.'

For the tired world what raptures blest  
Thou givest birth, sweet day of rest !  
Baptized with dews of purer grace,  
Earth wears with thee a heavenlier face.

No sounds so glad fall on my ear,  
As when thy pleasant chimes so dear  
Ring out the week-day toil and din,  
And ring the happy Sabbath in.

There seems a spirit in the air,  
Which loves God's presence to declare,  
And draws the heart with tender chords  
To heed the Father's loving words.

Oh, would that we had ears to hear,  
To-day, that Voice rise sweet and clear ;

That re-assured each soul might be,  
Its spirit is, O God, with Thee.

With Thee in worship, there to find  
The revelations of Thy mind :  
For on this day, the rest above,  
God sets His signet-ring of love.

Woe to the sacrilegious hand  
That would efface it from the land,  
To leave Life one unbroken chain  
Of days of toil for sordid gain.



#### BEFORE THE CROSS.

BEFORE the Cross of Christ, in prayer,  
The soul may leave its load of care ;  
And, whatsoe'er its guilt may be,  
Secure a Saviour's pardon free.

None may despair : His latest breath,  
In the strong agony of death,  
Mingled with Mercy's accents true—  
'Forgive ; they know not what they do !'

Even for hands that caused to start  
The life-blood from His breaking heart,  
His soul with gracious pity moved—  
God's sign how fallen man was loved.

And we, who, though not in the flesh,  
Have crucified the Lord afresh,  
Have press'd the thorns about His brow—  
Oh ! dare we sue for mercy now ?

And is His voice, with accents sweet,  
Still pleading at the mercy-seat ?  
Still lives He there, to intercede  
For all who feel a Saviour's need ?

Yes, seraphs in the light above  
Record the triumphs of His love ;  
Still He forgives, as none forgave,  
The soul that trusts His power to save !



#### THE SPIRIT'S NEED.

'MIDST Nature's fairest scenes we rove,  
And sigh in vain for peace and love :  
Glories of Earth delight the eye,  
But fail the soul to satisfy.

We need a sense of Succour near ;  
We need a Voice our souls to cheer ;  
A Hand to guide our feet aright  
Out of the darkness into light.

They grope in vain with blinded sight  
Who look to folly's lamps for light ;  
Earth's pleasures on the senses pall  
When we need comfort most of all.

What can avail the song, the jest,  
That leaves the soul in dark unrest ;  
Or all the bliss our lives can win,  
With sense of unforgiven sin ?

We need, as much as light and air,  
The Love that hears and answers prayer :  
We need, as much as bread to eat,  
Faith to hold fast His promise sweet.

We need a Friend on whom to call  
For certain help, whate'er befall—  
A loving arm to lean upon,  
When earthly friends and hopes are gone.

Lives there a friend so true as this ?  
Breathes there a love, of so much bliss ?  
With outstretch'd Hand, and Heart to bless,  
The voice of Jesus answers, Yes.



## THE PALACE 'BEAUTIFUL.'

BRIGHT gleams the Palace 'Beautiful,'  
Far up the heavenly heights ;  
God's children true and dutiful  
Behold its starry lights.

His faithful ones may gaze within,  
And view the sight so fair,  
And hear the welcome words, 'Come in,'  
From Him who reigneth there.

And on their souls a loving Hand  
With gentle touch is laid,  
To lead them through a sorrowing land,  
'Midst danger undismay'd.

And on their ear sweet falls the song  
His happy angels sing :  
'A little while, and Death and Wrong  
Shall lose their bitter sting.

'A little while, be strong and brave,  
And prayer shall cease for praise ;  
Heart-treasures hid in tear-dew'd graves  
In glory Christ shall raise.

'A little while, and ye shall meet  
Beloved ones gone before ;  
Shall share the joy, made pure and sweet,  
Of love that dies no more.'

Hear, hear this music of the soul,  
O ye yet unforgiven,  
Who see but clouds of darkness roll  
Between your hearts and Heaven.

The Heavenly Voice speaks 'Peace' above :  
'Come unto me and rest :  
My Palace halls, alight with love,  
Await the willing guest !'



### ECCE HOMO !

THE *voice* of Jesus ! O how sweet  
Its gracious accents fall !  
'Rest for the weak and weary feet,  
Pardon and peace for all.'

The *smile* of Jesus ! Light of light  
For Life's rough, narrow way ;  
It penetrates Death's darkest night  
With Hope's celestial ray.



The *look* of Jesus ! Lord of love,  
Cast no such glance on me  
Thou gavest Peter, to reprove  
Forgetfulness of Thee.

The *feet* of Jesus ! without stain,  
Unsoil'd by steps they trod,  
Mark still how we, through sin and pain,  
May find our way to God.

The *arms* of Jesus ! outstretch'd still  
The soul half-way to meet,  
Some precious promise to fulfil  
Of hope and comfort sweet.

The *hands* of Jesus ! ever near  
The sinking soul to bless ;  
To heal the wound, to wipe the tear,  
And make our sorrows less.

The *heart* of Jesus ! can it be,  
In His fair home above,  
He still retains, my soul, for thee  
A thought of pitying love ?

The *love* of Jesus ! Heaven and earth  
Have never fathom'd this  
Exhaustless joy, that by its birth  
Secures eternal bliss.



## THE COMFORTER.

JESUS, Thou Joy in all distress,  
Leave not my spirit comfortless.  
Thou know'st the sorrows of my soul,  
The tears that stain life's blotted scroll ;  
Look down with mercy from above,  
Smile on me with a smile of love :  
Jesus, be Thou my Comforter !

Now, whilst the waves of trouble roll,  
While unbelief distracts the soul,  
While dark temptations o'er me lower,  
Save, save me from the Tempter's power.  
When dangers rise and doubts assail,  
And earthly hopes and friendships fail,  
Jesus, be Thou my Comforter !

O lead me, by Thy loving hand,  
Thine *own way* to the Promised Land ;  
And teach me, when I bend the knee,  
My every hope to trust in Thee ;  
Though Death should claim earth's dearest one,  
In all to say, 'Thy will be done !'  
Jesus, be Thou my Comforter !

However great our griefs may be,  
They have before been borne by Thee :  
So give me strength to bear my cross,  
To count as gain all earthly loss,  
That leads, by faith, my spirit where  
A Saviour's love receives my prayer :  
JESUS, BE THOU MY COMFORTER !



### SUSPIRIA.

OUT of Earth's weariness, trial, and sorrow,  
Out of its hopes and its fears for the morrow,  
Out of its restless unsatisfied yearnings,  
Out of the fever of human heart-burnings,  
Out of the dangers of doubt and temptations,  
Out of the griefs of deplored separations,  
Out of the pain of night-watching, removed  
Into the sleep that God gives His Belovèd :  
Into the dawn of a glad Resurrection,  
Into the home of unbroken affection,  
Into the joy of the Lord, thence confessing  
Death in disguise is His Angel of Blessing.



# Opinions of the Press

OR

## 'POEMS,' BY ROWLAND BROWN.\*

Contenting ourselves with such glimpses of his mind and character as Mr. Rowland Brown has given us in these snatches of song, we should gather that he is a deep lover of nature, who has caught some of Wordsworth's thought that every poet is a priest of nature, a minister in a temple not made with hands, and lays reverently on an altar kindled with no false fire morning and evening sacrifices, flowers for the spring and chaplets for autumn, hymns for the young year and dirges for the dying year. Much has been said on the connexion between natural and revealed religion, and he who goes over the ground again as a theologian must tread on the ashes of controversies not yet extinct. Very beautifully does Mr. Rowland Brown see in this way into the heart of things. Easter is to him the symbol of spring, as much as spring is the symbol of Easter. The *celundini*, the swallow-flower (which, by-the-by, in the pretty fable is supposed to come with the swallows and with them to depart), leads him

"God's face to see in the flowers He has made."

As a protest against the sensuous spasmodic style of the Swinburne school, we welcome poetry like that of Mr. Rowland Brown's. Like Wordsworth's *Skylark*, he is true to the kindred points of heaven and home.—*British Quarterly Review*.

'The author of *SONGS OF EARLY SPRING* has evidently sat at the feet of Wordsworth. He is, however, no servile imitator. He goes straight to Nature for his inspiration. He has sung of her in all her moods. We prefer, however, his spring lyrics. He has caught in them something of the spirit of the season when "heavy Saturn leaps and laughs." This is the characteristic of our early poets. But in these days, following the example of a certain French school, we have suddenly become enamoured with the decaying beauties of autumn. We prefer, therefore, the healthy freshness of Mr. Rowland Brown's muse.—*Westminster Review*.

'Poems noteworthy for their unaffected piety and straightforwardness of sentiment.—*London Quarterly Review*.

'Mr. Rowland Brown rejoices in those simple homely lessons which we learn from the contemplation of nature and the details of our domestic life. In his poems we find no influence of the working of the mediæval spirit, no tendency

\* London: E. Moxon, Son, and Co. Fourth Edition, 336 pp. Cloth 8vo. 5s.

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to treat only of subjects whose history is half veiled by the darkness of past ages, and whose heroes loom larger and more magnificent through the twilight of distance through which they appear, but we do find that spirit of true poetry which discovers the beauties that lurk behind the most carelessly-viewed natural objects. Like the boys of the familiar tale of "Eyes and no Eyes," he sees lessons to be inculcated in the humblest flower, and invests the simplest thing with the glamour of poetic fancy. . . . We are glad to welcome him, more especially for the "Lays of Little Ones," and we are glad to see our young poets opening up again so fresh and charming a vein of poetry.'—*London Illustrated Review*.

'Mr. Rowland Brown has a sensitive feeling for what is beautiful in nature, and in his volume of three hundred pages we find nothing in the poems which does not give us a good opinion of the writer.'—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

'Rowland Brown is not a mere rhymester, but a poet whose writings have a vigour and beauty in them which prove them to be the emanations of a refined and original mind. Some of the poems are more musical than profound, but in others we recognise the deep thoughts of one who thinks to some purpose, and with an originality which is not often met with among the poets of the day.'—*Standard and Morning Herald*.

'Songs and poems possessing so forcible a character that they can scarcely fail to continue to be favourably received and enjoy a popular circulation.'—*The Hour*.

'Our author has right to sing, because he possesses real musical instincts. These we can prove by eight lines, in a metre certain to betray any versifier who counts syllables on his fingers in place of obeying his instincts:—"Bird of the sunny Spring," &c. And here is another extract, to show that Mr. Rowland Brown's music does not depend on one tune. . . Besides warblings about bird, brook, and meadow, we have delightful sonnets, love-poems, and patriotic odes.'—*Athenæum*.

'Full of the most beautiful and refined sentiments, these poems possess a freshness and originality peculiarly their own. It is clear that they are the emanations of a truly poetical mind. Altogether this is a delightful volume.'—*Dispatch*.

'A true appreciation of nature and a healthy tone of feeling give a charm to this volume of song and song-like poems.'—*Guardian*.

'Poetry full of sterling sentiment and thoroughly musical in its flow. Mr. Rowland Brown writes with a nervous force which is very effective, and, eschewing all lackadaisical absurdities, he puts into his verses common sense and sound philosophy. Discoursing of every-day matters, he looks at surrounding objects with a poet's eye, and sees everywhere much to admire, much to make life pleasant, and much from which to learn. Flowers, birds, children, and the like, are subjects of which he loves to sing, and so well does he deal with them that the reader cannot but share to some extent the elevation of feeling which the writer manifests.'—*Rock*.

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'Under the two collective titles, *SONGS OF EARLY SPRING* and *LAYS OF LATER LIFE*, Mr. Rowland Brown has produced a volume of poems, which are both correctly turned verse and pure wholesome thought. The first portion, on its former appearance in 1858, was praised by us for its treatment of pleasing themes, the home affections and virtues, and the beautiful aspects of nature, in a fresh and healthy tone, with a quiet vigour of style. We can, in the present instance, not only repeat this commendation, but advance upon it to a still higher estimate of Mr. Rowland Brown's poetry, which is of a sound and genuine quality, inspired by a reflecting sympathy with all that is best in human feelings and purposes, beneath the serene and steady light of a cheerful religious faith.'—*Illustrated London News*.

'Knowing, as we do, that this is the age of poetasters, we took up these poems by Rowland Brown with no very pleasurable feelings. "Ten—aye, twenty to one," we muttered, "here is another author who has mistaken his vocation." However, for once we have been agreeably disappointed. Rowland Brown not only gives us rhyme and rhythm (and how many do not give us even these!), but he shows us that he has imagination and true poetic insight. Many of his lyrics are exceedingly beautiful; a few of them are gems of their kind. Moreover, one and all are polished, for our poet has done nothing hastily.'—*Pictorial World*.

'These poems deserve notice, if only as bright examples that it is not necessary that religious art or religious thought should outrage nature; but, on the contrary, that the highest forms of thought are those inspired by the simplest operations of nature. Looking at nature not merely as an ingenious piece of mechanism, set in motion once and for ever, and left to itself, but regarding all its operations as daily and hourly manifestations of the will of Him who saw that all things were good, Mr. Rowland Brown sings in glad strains of the beauty of all created things as symbols of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, and in such a way that there can be little fear of the symbols ever taking the place of the ideas they embody. There is so much that is sound and healthy in this fourth edition of his poems, that we part with it earnestly hoping that it may not be the last embodying as it does the spirit of the great lines in the *Ancient Mariner*:—

"He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things, both great and small;  
For the great God who loveth us,  
He made and loves them all."—*Queen*.

'This handsome volume contains a number of poetical effusions; the author is evidently a devout admirer of nature. His verse is redolent of flowers and fields, singing-birds and breezes, that each and all hold eloquent discourse upon the greatest of all themes.'—*Weekly Times*.

'Offsprings of a mind in sympathy with all that is beautiful in nature. We have a strong conviction that the merits of the young poet will be acknowledged by all who can appreciate the beautiful and true; and we hope the time is not far distant when he will again try his powers, and scatter some more flowers in our path.'—*Bell's Weekly Messenger*.

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'No one can deny that Rowland Brown is gifted with a sparkling fancy, and, what to him is of inestimable value, the power of investing common objects with uncommon interest.'—*Critic*.

'A volume of real poetry. Each poem bears the impress of a thoughtful mind, and is full of melody. There are several beautiful little lyrics that we had noted for quotation, but all are so good that the task of selection becomes difficult. We therefore content ourselves with commending the volume most heartily.'—*City Press*.

'A volume of delightful minor poems.'—*News of the World*.

'Mr. Rowland Brown's heart-spoken songs and idyllic odes tell us that there lives a poet yet amongst us who can give us a collection of genuine poems, that are neither imitations of Tennyson nor paraphrases of the classics, but in every sense of the word original and illustrative of the Divine utterance, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Mr. Rowland Brown loves to analyse the sources of emotion in domestic life, and the reflex of those emotions in the ways and works of Nature. He is a "domestic" poet in the broadest sense of the term. He does not affect the heroic or travel far into the realms of fancy; like Wordsworth, he finds all the suggestions of poetic thought, and all the material for poetic composition, close at hand, in the commonest things of the objective world, and the most familiar experiences of the subjective. He is neither a dreamer, nor an idler, nor a trifler on Parnassus, but a seeker after wisdom and a dispenser of comfort and hope in the busy world that is peopled by men and women. He is finely inspired with a love of nature, and has the rare gift of ample knowledge of the material world. Hence, his diction being pure and exalted, his poetry claims alliance with philosophy and religion, while it bears the outward grace of imagery and illustration, derived from knowledge and a delicate perception of analogies.'—*Gardeners' Magazine*.

'A fourth edition of Mr. Rowland Brown's poems entitles him to the consideration and rank of one of our established favourites. His verses have struck a bolder note, and the ring of their melody has caught the public ear. It is in itself a kind of instalment of immortality to hear one's verses sung by mill-girls in the manufacturing districts, and to gather in this way that one has the true gift of the minstrel—a power which we can only compare to that of entering in disguise into the Danish camp, and there soothing the savage spirit of the heathen from beyond the sea with song, as Alfred is said to have done more than once. In this respect Rowland Brown may claim a high place among minor poets. The secret, perhaps, of his success, lies in his striking a keynote which goes home to the heart of the large class of workers. He is the poet of daily life and common-place duties. We can understand, as we turn over his "Words for Workers," why he has caught the ear of the many who live by daily toil. He has understood that the secret of a poet's success is the same as that of the prophet's commission: "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem;" or, as it is in the margin, "to the heart of Jerusalem."—*Literary World*.

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'Mr. Rowland Brown's new volume will worthily sustain his reputation as a singer of sweet songs. This volume contains several new lyrics, in addition to those previously published under different titles—as "Words for Workers," "Lays of Little Ones," &c. &c. He has real poetical instincts, and all his verses breathe of hope and spring, and the flowers of life. Who that remembers his "Song to the Flowers" but will acknowledge him a true poet?'—*Bookseller*.

'There is much of the tenderness and freshness of morning, the bright promise and sparkling of spring, in the early poems, tones of deep love and intimate communion with nature; they are buds of thought that open in the heart of the sympathizing reader, and fill him with pleasant memories of the morning of life.'—*Shields Daily News*.

'Imbued with a deep and true love for the beautiful, fraught with pure devotional feeling, full of the fire and ambition of youth—all appealing to the best feelings of the heart.'—*York Herald*.

'Really beautiful poetry.'—*Northern Ensign*.

'We have among us many sweet singers who delight us with their wood-notes wild or their city songs. Foremost among these we would class Mr. Rowland Brown. If his circle of readers be not large, it ought to be.'—*Stirling Journal*.

'To him "the meanest flower that blows" evidently gives "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."'—*Whitehaven News*.

'There is about Mr. Rowland Brown's poems a felicitous freedom of language, a rare combination of simplicity and power, a healthy, honest tone in every little lyric; for they have a freshness and beauty peculiarly their own. It was Dr. Arnold's daily prayer for his Rugby scholars that they should possess a sincere love of goodness; and this, added to a yearning after what is lovely in nature also, seems to have been the inspiration of these poems and the aim of their writer.'—*Western Flying Post*.

'Songs of a most pleasing character, embracing a great variety of subjects, and evincing a refined sense of the beauties of nature, and earnest appreciation of the good and the beautiful.'—*Bristol Mercury*.

'Throughout all there is the same vein of true poetry, the same devotional spirit, the same delightful love of nature, with its flowers, and sweet perfumes, and trickling rills. It is a book to which one would wish a general circulation, for the aspirations it will rouse and the humanizing influences it will exert.'—*Sherborne Journal*.

'Mr. Rowland Brown is no common-place poet. His are not borrowed streams from ancient Helicon, filtered through the flowery gauze of fictitious sentiment; but rush with glowing energy, pure and poetic, fresh from the heart.'—*Midland Gazette*.

'There is a numerous class of readers who will enjoy the poems of Mr. Rowland Brown. For sweet versification, polished diction, warm, yet pure feeling, and prettiness of fancy, they deserve praise.'—*Hereford Times*.



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'The tendency of the whole is to refine, improve, and elevate, to soften down asperities, light up the soul with a new born philanthropy, and to proclaim the glories, the mercies, and the attributes of the Giver of all good.'  
—*Wexford Independent*.

'Rowland Brown is the poet who brings us back through a vista of memories to the home of our childhood—not a wild exaggerated picture of the fertile imagination, but with the faithful picture whose very naturalness and truthfulness finds a ready sympathy in our hearts. Recollections, affections, and experiences which had been lost upon the troubled ocean of life are here recalled in elegant language and embellished with pretty similes that make one almost feel that he is living a life over again without feeling the little ill that once troubled us.'—*Carmarvon Herald*.

'From the mystic-stilted and laboured poetry, of which we have had too much of late years, it is refreshing to turn to poems which have the ring of true melody, and the too-little-prized quality of common sense combined with noble sentiments. We have just been reading with delight such a book, the collected poems of Rowland Brown. The matter and the manner, the themes and the imagery, are alike admirable, and are in pleasing contrast to the productions of certain poets whom it is the fashion to admire, but who only seem to be admired because it is the fashion.'—*Flintshire Observer*.

'In the field of nature, from its rich and varied stores, Rowland Brown's muse has found generous aliment, calculated to strengthen and brighten his naturally quick perception of the beautiful. Its influence upon his genial nature has found fitting expression in song; tender, chaste, and good. He breaks out into rapturous exultations when discoursing of bird, meadow, sea, stream, and sunshine—seeing reflected in all these the hand, the goodness, and the wisdom of Him who made them all. No mere materialist is the author of these charming lays. While admitting secondary causes, he soars above them all; in the spirit of a former poet his constant refrain is, "The hand that made them is Divine."'—*Guernsey Comet*.

'Rowland Brown's *SONGS OF EARLY SPRING AND LAYS OF LATER LIFE*, a book of pleasant verse, has reappeared. If the old music—which is ever new—pure, simple, and heart-stirring, has not lost its fireside charm, this book must win a place amongst the most welcome additions to the library of him who can appreciate a poet's graceful thoughts and fancies, clothed, as they are here, in unaffectedly natural language.'—*South Durham Mercury*.

'Although Rowland Brown says—

"Man's work may grow sublime,  
The simple task through which we plod,  
A ladder be, by which to climb  
Into the fairer home of God"—,

yet in his poems we find no religious cant or dogmatism upon impossible creeds. "A man" and "a gentleman" are described with an independent spirit, sensitive enough when reviewing the fooleries and shams of what is called Society.'—*Midland Counties Advertiser*.

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' . . . The characteristic feature of these poems may be said to be the inherent proofs they contain of the truths of the cardinal points of Catholic Christianity. They are parables, sermons almost, without in the least appearing on the surface to be so. . . . Wordsworth, Shelley, and the Ettrick Shepherd, have sung of the skylark, but not thus have they described the power and pathos of its song.'—*King's County Chronicle*.

'Craving for sensational novelties has become a perfect bar to healthy literary cultivation. English classics are neglected for semi-dramatic absurdities, and the pernicious trash which glorifies vice, and causes the higher instincts to fade off into imbecility or be wrapped into scepticism. A thoughtful study of hopeful and refined poetry, such as this, would do much to avert these evils. We think this poem—"The Nightingale"—quite enough to justify Rowland Brown's right to the bays and position of a poet. The second verse of "The Nightingale" is really exquisite, the mystical note of the bird blending with the quiet forest scene and soft moonlights, forming a lovely picture of subdued tone and fanciful expression. Religion, often unfortunately made the cause of bitter strife and ceaseless differences, in this little volume is fused into an universal feeling, which renders the book suitable for Catholic or Protestant, the gentle piety that characterises it being of a quality with which all believing Christians may sympathise.'—*Tipperary Free Press*.

'Poems written in pure, elegant, and attractive language, charming the ear, while appealing to the heart.'—*Brighton Examiner*.

'About these poems there is a warm glow of home life and home instincts which, combined with their high moral tone, cannot fail to secure for them something more than a mere fleeting popularity.'—*Barnesley Chronicle*.

'We are glad to see Rowland Brown's poems in so complete a form. We cannot suggest a more suitable gift-book at this season. . . . We never read a sweeter poem, nor one that breathed a higher and nobler spirit of resignation, than the one entitled "The Eve of Death."'—*Wrexham Advertiser*.

'This is a new book of poems by one whose name is fairly entitled to become a household word in the county of Dorset. . . . From the poems "By the Sea" we could not do better than select the following, "The Lighthouse," especially as it is of local interest, and is sure to become a favourite in all parts of the district where the lights of Portland serve as a beacon to travellers by sea and land.'—*Dorset Guardian*.

'This edition of Rowland Brown's poems has a special claim upon readers in this island, for a summer visit to Bonchurch has inspired thirteen of the most exquisite sonnets in the collection. Under a general title of "Relics of Rosenheim," we find these classified. They bear internal evidence that the poet was by no means only intoxicated with a sensuous enjoyment of the "delicious scent of myrtles," or "lulling music of the waves." He shows us more than a sunny picture of the pretty garden of "Rosenheim," when he gives his first impressions of the little church in the undercliff. Our photographers will find the sonnet quotable for descriptive purposes.'—*Isle of Wight Express*.

## OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

'Out of the numerous books of poems which have lately emanated from the press, this deserves, and is likely to occupy, a decidedly distinguished place. "Songs of Early Spring," "By the Sea," "Lays of Little Ones," "In Summer and Harvest Days," "Words for Workers," and "In Winter Days," are the titles of the divisions of the book. We mention them to indicate, however dimly, the range of the poet's vision. Natural, tender, and graceful, are appellations that fitly apply to nearly every page of the book.'—*Buffalo Daily Advertiser (American)*.

'Rowland Brown has brought together, in a very pretty volume, a collection of stray pieces of which many an older and more pretentious hand might well be proud. Everything in this bouquet of intellectual sweets is fresh and spring-like. We congratulate him upon his production, and heartily commend him to our numerous readers. His book is full of beautiful thoughts, and is sure of a place in the library of every tasteful reader. Our limited space enables us to make only one extract, but it will suffice as a specimen of the true poetic metal of which the volume rings from the first page to the last.'—*Pulman's Weekly News*.

'Tasteful and elegant, breathing a fine spirit of poetry. Amidst much that is beautiful we select the following,' &c.—*Ladies' Newspaper*.

'Rowland Brown's "SONGS OF EARLY SPRING" with "LAYS OF LATER LIFE," are the productions of a real poet, and will be welcomed in many a family circle at this season. . . . We welcome them as healthy contributions to our poetic literature.'—*Kells's Gazette*.

'Scattered through the volume are poems minute and elaborate to a degree. The most lively, the most lovely sketches of nature and imagery, frequently occur. "The Skylark" opens with the following glorious description of a Spring morning:—

"See, the flower-spangled banners of the Spring," &c.

The religious poems scarcely come under the class of which Johnson, in his life of Waller, wrote:—"All that pious verse can do, is to help the memory and delight the ear; and for these purposes it may be very useful; but it supplies nothing to the mind." Nor do they set forth any especial doctrines which would bring them under the master's infliction contained in these words,—"The ideas of Christian theology are too simple for eloquence, too sacred for fiction, and too majestic for ornament; to recommend them by trope and figures, is to magnify by a concave mirror the sidereal hemisphere." The poems simply contain an elevated morality and a broad spirit of charity which, distinguished from technical piety, are none the less helps to what is best in man. The last verse of "Different Paths" thus closes:—

"Brother, who, without charity,  
Thinkest thy path alone  
To Heaven is right, and scornest me  
For that I make my own,—  
Think of the streams in the Sea:  
For even as they may we  
Meet in the Great Unknown."—*Torquay Times*.

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